

149.
A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the
FUNERAL of the Reverend
Mr. Francis Tallents,

Minister of the Gospel in *Shrewsbury,*

Who dy'd there *April 11. 1708.*

In the Eighty Ninth Year of his Age.

With a short Account of his

LIFE and DEATH.

By *MATTHEW HENRY,*
Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N:

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1709.

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A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the
FUNERAL of the Reverend
Mr. *Francis Tallents.*

April the 15th. 1708.

J U D E 21.

*Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus
Christ unto Eternal Life.*

HAD I been left at Liberty to choose my Subject on this sad and solemn Occasion, I should certainly have pitch'd upon some Text or other that would have led me to shew what a *Great Man* (I might say, *a Prince and a Great Man*, for such Men as he that have wrestled and prevail'd in Prayer are *Israels Princes with GOD*) *is fallen this Day* in our Tribe, and what a great Loss we have of him, some Text that would have been proper to affect us with Sorrow for the Breach made upon us, which cannot but touch us the more sensibly, because we have been so lately wounded again and again in the same tender part. Tho' we have a great deal of reason with Thankfulness to acknowledge the

Gen.
35. 8.

Benignity of Providence in continuing such a Great Blessing as his Life was so long to us, yet his Capacity for further Usefulness being also wonderfully prolong'd, we ought to look upon his Removal as a further Token of GOD's Displeasure against us, and to lament it with a holy Fear. *Jacob's* Family so greatly lamented the Death of *Rebekah's* Nurse, who could not but be very old, that the Place where they bury'd her was call'd *Allen-Bacuth*, the *Oak of Weeping*. What a large debt of grateful and honourable Tears, is owing then to One that has been so long a Spiritual Father and Nurse in CHRIST's Family? The longer we enjoy good Men, the more we should love and honour what we see of CHRIST in them, and the greater Loss we should account their Removal from us. I should certainly raise up your Mourning, could I but be instrumental to stir up your Graces; your Love to GOD and his Image; your Zeal for CHRIST and his Kingdom: These would engage your Mourning for the Death of One that bore so much of GOD's Image, and did so much good Service to the Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom among Men, in his Day.

Josh.
1. 2.

Deut.
34. 5.

The Notice GOD took of the Death of *Moses*, *Moses my Servant is dead*, might probably, have been my Subject, and the rather, because like *Moses*, in his advanced Years, his Sight scarce waxed dim; and at length like him, he dy'd at the Mouth of the Lord. Or, *Elisha's* Lamentation for *Elijah's* Departure, which for my own part, I have reason to take up, *My Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof*. Or, CHRIST's Character of *John Baptist*, might well have suited the Occasion, *He was a burning and a shining Light*. Nay, Age being a Crown of Glory; the Old-age of such a One, who

who continu'd in his Usefulness to the last, being a Diadem of Beauty to all his Friends, One whose Days spoke so well, and the multitude of whose Years taught so much Wisdom; it had been no Solecism, to have apply'd to ourselves the lamenting Prophet's Words, *The Crown is fallen from our Heads; wo unto us, for we have sinned.* Lam. 5. 16.

But our Reverend Father, seeking your Edification, and not his own Honour, has appointed the Text now read to you, to be the Subject of my Thoughts and yours at this time. He mention'd it to me a Year or two ago, as that which he desir'd might be preach'd upon at his Funeral, laying the Emphasis upon the Word *Mercy*: *Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.* For (said he) all my hopes of Eternal Life, are built purely upon the *Mercy of my Lord Jesus Christ.* I have nothing else to trust to; so that by this Text, he being dead, yet speaketh. *Hear, and your Souls shall live.*

Many, and many a good Word he hath spoken to you in GOD's Name, as feelingly and affectionately, as much from the Heart, and discovering as much of a natural Care for your State, as most Men I ever heard, now take this as his dying Word; and dying Words should make living and lasting Impressions: Take it as his last Farewel; his Legacy (I may call it) to this Congregation, and a valuable Legacy it is. After he had been 56 or 57 Years labouring among you in the Word and Doctrine, as opportunity favour'd, with this Word he breathes his last; This Text he *lives and dyes by*, 'tis his *Consummatum est*, and finishing his Course, with it he *finisheth his Testimony.* Would you have the Conclusion of the whole Matter, and whatever you forget, will you be sure to remember that 'tis this, *Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus unto Eternal Life.*

O that you and I might hear attentively the Instructions of it, might hear them from the Grave, tho' it be a Land of silence; might hear them from Heaven, not as the Word of *dying Men*, but of the *living God*, who has directed us not only what we must *do*, but what we may *expect*! Let the Mercy of our Lord JESUS CHRIST be always before our Eyes, and let the believing Expectation of it, fill our Souls, be *inlaid* there: Let these Words be written on the Tables of our Hearts, as with a Pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond, *Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.*

I take it for granted, that our deceas'd Father in the choice of this Text, design'd these Two Things,

1. To *express the Workings of his own Heart*, his own Sentiments and devout Affections, and to let you know that he for his part was a Believing Expectant of Eternal Life, and a Believing Dependant on CHRIST and his Mercy for it, and continued so to the last, and had not chang'd his mind.

2. To *impress the like on your Hearts*, and to engage and encourage you with the same things with which he found himself encourag'd and engag'd: He would have you also stir'd up to seek for *Eternal Life* in *Christ's Mercy*, and to seek till you find. He seem'd desirous with the last Blaze of his expiring Lamp, if it might be by the Grace of GOD (that Blessed Heavenly Fire) to kindle the same pious Affections in you that his own Heart was enflam'd with. O that I had more of his Spirit, then I could the better lay before you his Thoughts that took rise from these words! I have look'd upon it as none of the least of the Blessings of my Life, that ever since I was capable of it, I have been more or less at times made
happy

happy with his Conversation, and many an Hour have spent, abundantly to my Satisfaction in Fellowship with him; And as it was his Condescension so it was my Advantage, that he was very communicative of his Observations and Experiences, in all his Discourses full of CHRIST and another World; so that I never parted from him but I might have been the wiser and better for my being with him, and as much from him as perhaps from any Friend I ever had, might have learn'd both Discretion and Devotion, that is, how to Converse both with GOD and Man. But if the Countenance has for a while been *sharpen'd by such a Friend, as Iron is with Iron*, alas, it grows Dull again, and we want that Liveliness when we have occasion for it. O that the Blessed Spirit of GOD would bring this Word home to my Heart and yours, would *open our Understandings, and make our Hearts to burn within us*, so that from this precious Line of Sacred Writ we may gather *now*, and lay up *for a time of need*, that Honey which I believe this Blessed Servant of GOD did in his own Meditations suck from it, and may experience the same Relish and Power of it which we have reason to think he had the Pleasure of. The Scripture is a full Fountain, out of which we may draw as much Water, and with as much Joy, as others that have gone before us, who have recommended it to us to be our Guide and Stay as it has been theirs. Streams from this Rock follow'd *them* through this Wilderness to Canaan, where the Water will be turn'd into Wine; and they will not fail *us*, nor be to us as the Brooks in Summer, if we be not wanting to ourselves.

First than, Let us consider this Text, as recommended to us with this Design, to express this good Man's Believing, Hope and Expectation of *Eternal Life*, through the *Mercy of our*

Lord Jesus Christ. Having liv'd in Faith, thus
 Heb. he dy'd in Faith, seeing the Promis'd Land afar
 11.13. off, but embracing the Promise of it, as faithful, and
 worthy of all acceptance, very sure, and very pre-
 cious; dying with the Promise in his Arms, and
 the Life promis'd in his Eye. This Reason, this
 1 Pet. Account, he gives of the Hope that was in him, with
 3. 15. Meekness and Fear; That he hop'd for Eternal
 2621 Life, and hop'd in the Mercy of our Lord Jesus
 Christ to bring him to it; and that this
 Hope was to him as an Anchor of the Soul, sure
 and steadfast, entring before into that within the
 Vail, whither he himself is now enter'd.

It is the Privilege and Happiness of dying
 Christians, that they can look with Ease and Sa-
 tisfaction on 't'other side Death and the Grave;
 can see firm Land, and a good Land beyond that
 rough and stormy Sea, and this enables them to
 look Death in the Face, and to look down into
 the Chambers of Darknes, without change of
 Countenance. They know not only whence
 Death's Commission comes, from their Father's
 Hand, but whither it will bring them, to their
 Father's House, where they long to be. Dying
 is not to them as it is to Atheists and Infidels, a
 great Leap in the Dark. No marvel, if from one that
 knows not, or receives not Divine Revelation, we
 hear sad Complaints of Uncertainty, and how
 much the departing Soul is at a loss. *Dubius vixi,*
anxius morior, quo vadam nescio, said one: *Ani-*
mula vagula blandula, Quæ nunc abibis in loca, said
 another. And we have been lately told, That

Dr. Mr. Hobbs (that *Leviathan*, that crooked Serpent)
 Kennets when notwithstanding the vain Hopes he had
 Ac- flatter'd himself with, that tho' old, he
 count should live yet a while, he was told, that he
 of the could not continue long, wish'd, *O that I could*
 D. of now find a Hole at which to creep out of this World!
 Devon's Family. But

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But they that by Faith build on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and are united to CHRIST the chief Corner-stone, have a holy humble Confidence towards GOD in a Dying-hour, and having put themselves under a Divine Conduct, can easily leave the Land of their Nativity, in prospect of the better Country, *that is, the Heavenly*: And tho', like their Father Abraham, they go out not knowing *whither they* Heb. go; yet like him, they go out with chearfulness, 11. 8. knowing *whom they follow*, and being assur'd that he will shew them the Path of Life. And tho' they Ps. 16. cannot particularly describe the Future Bliss, 11. 'tis a Glory which is to be reveal'd, yet they are sure it is enough to make them perfectly and eternally Happy. And knowing *whom they have trusted* with all the Concerns of their Felicity, even the same whom the Father has trusted with all the Concerns of his Glory, they know very well, He is able to keep what they have committed to him, unto that Day, when it shall be call'd for; 2 Tim. 1. 12. and be ready to receive that Spirit, which they then resign to him, and trust him with. In the assurance of this, they can walk with a holy Security through the Valley of the shadow of Death, fearing no evil after Death, and therefore fearing none in Death.

Let this be observ'd to the Honour of the Christian Religion, and the Everlasting Gospel on which it is founded, that thence are fetch'd such substantial powerful Antidotes against the fear of Death, as the best of the Heathen Moralists could never offer. The Platonists sometimes call'd their Philosophy *Meditatio mortis*, and taught their Disciples to think of Death; but they could not teach them to triumph over it, as our Religion teacheth us, O Death where is thy sting! Let it also be observ'd for our Encouragement to Diligence

Diligence and Constancy in the Work of GOD,
 2 Pet. that so we shall have not only *an Entrance*, but
 1. 11. *an abundant Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom*.
 What is there in Death to be dreaded, when it is
 only our Passage to that *Eternal Life* which
through the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ we are
looking and longing for!

And as it is the Happiness of dying Christians,
 that they have the Hope of Eternal Life to stay
 themselves upon in that darksome Valley, so it
 Ps. 66. will be for the Glory of GOD and the Edifica-
 16. tion of Others, if they tell *what God has done for*
their Souls; and leave behind them a Testimony
 to the Sufficiency of the Divine Promise and
 Grace from their own Experience: Some per-
 haps may be invited into the ways of Religion,
 many however will be encourag'd therein, when
 they see and hear, with what Ease and Chearful-
 ness, those who have been long walking in these
 good Ways leave the World in expectation of the
Blessed Hope. Some have thought it no less than a
 Debt which at least the *Old Disciples* of CHRIST
 owe to those about them, to communicate to
 them the Comforts wherewith they are comforted
 of GOD, in the believing Prospects of the Glo-
 ry to be reveal'd. *I believed, therefore have I spoken*.
 2 Cor. 4. 13. Our deceas'd Father hath thus encourag'd us to
 go on in the way of GOD, by intimating to us,
 that he found abundant Comfort and Support
 under the Apprehensions of Death approaching,
 in depending upon the *Mercy of Christ*, and *looking*
for Eternal Life through him.

When he intimated his Mind, that I should
 preach his Funeral Sermon, he added, that he
 would not have me to praise him; But,

1. I hope it will be no Violation of that part
 of his Charge, to take notice even of that Prohi-
 bition to his Honour, his great Honour; the ve-

any mention of it, (and I am oblig'd to mention it, because otherwise it might justly be expected, that I should have been large in his Character) turns to his Praise; and my Silence so restrain'd speaks aloud, that he was one of those *humble in Spirit* whom *Honour will uphold*; One that *sought not his own Glory*, nor car'd to have a *Trumpet sounded after him*, any more than before him, *Ulgito monstrari, & dicier hic est*, but would rather do what was Praise-worthy than be prais'd for it. By this it appear'd, that he endeavour'd to approve himself to GOD, and was therefore dead to, and look'd with Contempt upon the Applause and Commendation of Men; and that he liv'd a Life of sincere Repentance and Self-judging, as the best Christians do; and was far from being like *Saul*, who even when he own'd his Guilt to *Saul*, saying, *I have sinned*, added in the next Breath; *yet honour me now before the Elders of my People*. And that he was one of those *Christians inwardly*, whose Praise is not of Men, not courted or desir'd of Men, but of God, and who make sure a *Witness in Heaven* and a *Record on high*, and then reckons it a *very small thing to be judg'd of Man's Judgment*. Herein let us be Followers of him, as he was of CHRIST: Let us not search our own Glory, for it is vain Glory, nay, it is not Glory, 'tis Glory that will be turn'd into Shame; Prov. 29. 23. but let us with a single Eye aim at GOD's Glory, and then that will reflect true Glory upon us, and Everlasting. 2 Sam. 15. 30. Prov. 25. 27.

He that doth but act a Part in Religion, may conclude as that Heathen Emperour did, with *valet & plaudite*, the Language of the Stage; but he whose Heart is upright with GOD, tho' he reckons a good Name better than precious Ointment, especially that, at the day of one's Death; yet he is so intent upon his Acceptance with GOD, that

that the other is as nothing to him; well knowing, that true Honour after Death ariseth not from *Mens Elogiums*, but from CHRIST's *Eugen* if our Master say, *well done*, the Matter is not great, what our Fellow-Servants say.

2. Nor will it (I hope) be any violation of his Charge to leave it to *his own Works* to praise him *in the Gates*; they do it, they will do it, *further and longer* than any thing I can say will. Generations to come will mention him with Honour for his *view of Universal History*, that copious comprehensive Work, which takes in all the Generals, and in a manner toucheth most of the Particulars that have swell'd the numerous Volumes of Historians: sure never was so much Learning, so much Reading crouded into so little a Compass; never was one Page in two Columns so well fill'd: This a Work confessedly exact and elaborate, and of general and of lasting Use. Let that vast Performance praise him for his Knowledge, Judgment, and great Industry.

Let his *sure and large Foundations*, his *History of Schism*, and the *Defence of it*; praise him for his Catholick Charity, and Moderation, and that healing Temper which as far as it prevails and hath the Ascendant will extinguish Heats, accommodate Differences among Christians, and bring and keep good People together in Love; conformable to the Design of our Blessed Redeemer, who dy'd that he might gather together in *John 11, 52.* *one the Children of God*, that under several Denominations, were scatter'd abroad.

But besides these Works of his, I hope, the good Success of his Ministry in this Place will praise him, and the *remaining Fruit* of it will be his Honour, as well as your Comfort and Advantage. Recollect what you have heard from him, and live it over. *You have fully known his Doctrine,*

manner

manner of Life, Faith, Charity, Patience, continue ^{1 Tim.}
 therefore in those things which you have learn'd, ^{3. 10,}
 and have been assur'd of, knowing that you have ^{14.}
 learn'd them of one who well understood them
 himself, and with a very tender Concern for
 our Souls press'd them upon you. Abound
 therefore in the Fruits of Righteousness, and so
 commend your keeping; make it appear you
 have been well fed with the Bread of Life, and
 enrich'd up with the Words of Faith and good Do- ^{1 Tim.}
 ctine, by your holy heavenly Conversations, your ^{4. 6.}
 sobriety, Justice, Charity, Meekness, Humility, and
 exemplary Walking in every thing, which will
 be an Ornament to your Profession, and the
 standing Praise of your Ministers that are gone;
 whose good Preaching will best survive them,
 and be best attested in your good Living. If at
 any time you are tempted to do an ill thing,
 remember you have not so learned Christ, but have
 been better taught the Truth as it is in Jesus. If I ^{Eph. 4.}
 may not praise him that's gone, thus you may, and ^{12.}
 others that thus see your Light shine before Men,
 will glorify your Father which is in Heaven.
 3. Tho' I may not praise him, yet I hope I
 may put you upon praising God for him. Men,
 the greatest and best of Men are but what the
 face of GOD makes them; all their Light
 they borrow from the Father of Lights. All
 their Oyl from the good Olive, they are ready
 to own it themselves, By the Grace of God, I am
 what I am; I live, yet not I; I labour'd yet not I; now
 we give the Glory of that Grace to him from
 whom it is deriv'd, and to whom the Praise of
 it belongs; whatever Honour that reflects at se-
 cond-hand on the chosen Instruments of that
 face, we do but our Duty. St. Paul never flat-
 ter'd his Friends, yet we oft find him thanking
 GOD for their Faith and Hope, their Love and
 Patience,

2 Cor. Patience, 'nor did he court their Applauses
 1. 11. him, he was far from it; yet he desir'd that *Thanks*
 might be *given by many on his behalf*, for who
 GOD enabled him to do and suffer in his Cause
 That just praise of Men turns to a good account
 which makes GOD its Centre, and runs up
 the Streams to the Fountain. *Not unto us, O Lord*
not unto us, but to thy Name give Glory.

You of this Congregation, have reason
 to bless GOD for your Ministers, for their Gifts
 and Graces, and Serviceableness to you. *Glorify*
the God of Israel. who hath given such Power unto
Men, and gave Men of such Power to you. When
 you reflect with a melancholly Thought upon
 those dark Providences which have of late
 mov'd from your Head Two Faithful Ministers
in the midst of their Days, and great Usefulness
 take occasion from thence, to bless GOD for
 that kind and gracious Providence which com-
 m'd One among you to a good Old-age, and con-
 tinu'd him in his Usefulness to the last. That
 GOD has try'd you with a variety of Instruments
 you have at the same time been bless'd with the

Phil. 2. Gravity and Authority of a Paul, the Aged, and with
 22. the Vigor and Liveliness of a Timothy, who as a Son
with the Father, serv'd with him in the Gospel: Each
 Age has its Advantage, if both have been advan-
 tageous to you, you have a great deal to be
thankful for; if neither, you have a great deal to
answer for. But whether they that piped unto you
 or they that mourned, have gain'd their Point
 or no, *Wisdom will be justify'd of her Children.*

Matth. 11. 19. The Sons of the Prophets have reason to bless
 GOD, that ever they had such a Father, such a
 Guide, such a Counsellor, such an Example
 I am sure I have, who am less than the least
 of them. May the Mantle of this *Elijah* cloath
 those who are left behind, that we may walk

the same Spirit; walk in the same Steps; and that we may shew forth the Thankfulness of our Hearts by the Conformity of our Lives to that Holy Religion, wherein we have been Instructed by those that were the Guides of our Youth, and by our steady and constant adherence to the Gospel of the Grace, the Free-Grace of God, which they liv'd and dy'd by.

4. I am sure, it is no Transgression of his Charge (for it must be what he chiefly intended in the choise of this Text) to observe the Testimony which, I think, he bore to some of the most precious and peculiar Principles of our Holy Religion, in making these Words his own; for this will be for your edifying, if it be not your own Fault.

Christ and Heaven, are the Peculiarities of the Gospel; there, and there only, do we find the Doctrine of a Mediator, between GOD and Man, and of Eternal Life: 'Tis by that Light only that these Great Things are discover'd, which were hid from Ages and Generations: 'Tis on the Truth of that Word, that our belief of these doth intirely depend. Much of GOD and his Glorious Attributes and Perfections may be learned by the Light of Nature; and many excellent Truths concerning him may easily be spell'd out of the Book of the Creatures. Many that learn't no higher than that Book, did great things concerning the Creator; much likewise of the present Pleasure and Advantages of Virtue, may be learn'd from the Dictates of natural Conscience, and the universal Experience of Mankind: But 'tis only by the Glorious Gospel of the blessed God, that Crown and Center of all Divine Revelation, that *Light and Immortality are brought to Light*; By it only we come to be acquainted with *Christ and Heaven*, Heaven as our End, and CHRIST as our Way; the Knowledge

Job 28. 14. Knowledge of these is that true *Wisdom* of which *the Depth saith, it is not in me; the Sea saith, it is not in me; and which the Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal.* These are the things of the Spirit of GOD which the meer *Animal Man receiveth not.* 'Tis only by the *New Testament*, that blessed Character of Divine Grace, that we come to be interested in CHRIST, and intir'd through him to Eternal Life, which makes the Christian Merchandise, *better than the Merchandise of Silver.*

These are the Two things which the Faith of a Christian doth in a special manner fasten upon; the Great Saviour, and the Great Salvation wrought out by him; these the Eye of Faith looks upon; these the Hand of Faith lays hold on. What's the Faith we live by, but the *Faith of the Son of God*, and that Faith which is the *Substance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not seen.*

Gal. 2. 20. Heb. 11. 1. What else is true Christianity but a *believing Dependence* upon the Mediation of CHRIST, with a devotedness to his Conduct and Government in every thing; and a *believing Expectation* of the Glory to be reveal'd, with a careful and diligent Preparation of ourselves for that Glory.

O what a holy Fire of *Love to Christ*, and *Desire towards Heaven* was kindled by this Faith, in the breast of this good Man; How did he himself feel it glow! How did those who convers'd with him see it flame! How did he *breath Christ*, and *breath towards Heaven*, even to the last Breath! Let us submit to the power of the same Faith, and we shall experience the Fruits of it. There was another Scripture which his Heart was much upon, when he saw the Day approaching; and that included *Christ*, and *Heaven* too, 'twas that Close of the Apostles Triumph over Death and the Grave, *Thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory;* (that is, brings us to Heaven, for till we come

come thither, we have not quite overcome) through our Lord Jesus Christ. But in this he chose to express to you the Faith in which he dy'd, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.

Give me leave to improve the dying Testimony of this great Scholar and Christian, for the Honour of pure Christianity; and the first Principles of it. In many Causes one aged Witness is worth twenty young ones; we have here an aged Witness to produce on Religion's side, who hath taken it upon his Death, that the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life is, what may be look'd for, with the greatest Assurance and Desire by all the Faithful Servants of JESUS CHRIST. Ask thy Father then, and he will shew thee, thine Elders, and they will tell thee, that they have found, and so wilt thou, no Righteousness and Strength to be depended upon, but in Christ; no Happiness and Life, but in Heaven. Those that plead Religion's Cause have Antiquity on their side, and the Wisdom and Experience of the Ancients, and may boast as Eliphaz doth, with us are the gray-headed, and very aged Men. The longer Men live in the World, the more Experience they have of its Vanity, and Insufficiency to make them happy, and that dries them to set their Hearts more on Heaven; and the more Experience they have of their own Weakness and Inability to help themselves, and that drives them to rest more upon Jesus Christ, and his Mercy and Grace. Let this recommend Religion to us, that those speak well of it who have had a long Acquaintance with it. Polycarp, that blessed Martyr, who in the first Ages of the Church, seal'd the Truth with his Blood at Smyrna, being vehemently urg'd by the Proconsul to renounce his Religion, and as an Evidence of it to speak ill of Christ,

B

reply'd

Deut. 32. 7.

Job 15. 10.

Euseb. Eccl. Hist.

L. 4. c. 15.

reply'd to this Purpose; *Fourscore and six Years*; I have serv'd Christ, and have always found him a good Master; how then can I speak ill of him now? Here was one that somewhat longer even to his 89th Year had been drawing in CHRIST's Yoke, and witnessed from his own Experience, that it was an easie Yoke; and that in the service of CHRIST he was born up and comforted, living and dying with the Expectation of his Mercy, even to *Eternal Life*.

There are Six great Truths contain'd in this Text, at least by Implication which he did in effect bear his Testimony to in the choise of it, and they are not Matters of nice and curious Speculation, which exercise the Wits of the Learned, nor Matters of doubtful Disputation, or Strifes of Words which too often engage the Passions of the Litigious, no, he was none of those that troubled the Minds of the Disciples with such things, but was himself fill'd, and desir'd to fill others with the great things of GOD, the weighty Matters of the Law and Gospel, which are *all our Salvation*, and therefore should be *all our Desire*; Nor did he spend his Zeal upon any thing but what all good Christians are agreed in, whatever different Sentiments they may have, and govern themselves by in lesser things. Call therefore, if there be any that will answer you, and to which of the Saints will you turn? Turn to which you will, of whatever Denomination (for, far be it, far be it from us to think, that those of our own are the only Ones) and you will find they all agree in these Principles of the Oracles of GOD, which I gather from this Text, which he that's gone bore his dying Testimony to, and which if we that survive were but more govern'd by, we should be every way better both in Heart and Life; and more loving and charitable to those

Job
5. 1.

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we differ from in lesser Matters, since the things wherein we differ are so few and small in comparison with the many and great Things wherein we are agreed.

First, That there is another Life after this: This is plainly imply'd in the mention which the Text makes of *Eternal Life*; for we are sure that this *present Life* is not *Eternal*; 'tis short and transient, and hastning away: And they who say, they *look for Eternal Life*, declare plainly, that they believe there is another Country to which they must *remove*, and in which they must *reside*, besides this through which they are *now passing*. And I the rather lay this down first, because our deceased Father particularly appointed, that the *Motto* engraven in the Rings to be given at his Funeral, should be this, *There is a Life after this:* GOD by his Spirit engrave it in all our Hearts! With this Word he comforted himself while he liv'd, and design'd to *Instruct* and *Admonish* us who for a little while are left behind. The plainest Truths are the most *precious*, and carrying with them the most convincing Evidence, should be the most *powerful*, and have the most commanding Influence upon us; such a one is this, worthy indeed to be *written in Gold*, and to be to us as the *Signet on our Right-hand*, ever with us, and continually before us.

And do we indeed believe, that there is a Future State, a Life after this! That besides this *World of Sense* we are conversant with, there is a *World of Spirits* we are ally'd to; and must have our everlasting abode in; that when we have pass'd through this World of Work and Probation, we must certainly go to another World of Recompence and Retribution, and must receive according to the things done in the Body? We say, We believe the Life of the World to come: But we

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think of it so seldom, so slightly, tho' sure, tho' near, tho' just at the door, we consider it so little, and are so little influenc'd by it in the management of ourselves, that it may well be ask'd, Do we indeed believe it? *Shew me thy Faith by thy Works.*

Do we believe there is another World, we must all be shortly lodg'd in for Eternity? What! and yet so fond of *this* World, as if we were to be here always? And so mindless of *that*, as if we had nothing to do in preparation for it? What! and yet do so much every day to disfit us for that Life, and so little to acquaint ourselves with the Employments and Enjoyments of it? What! and yet think so little of Death, which will very certainly, and may very suddenly remove us to that World? O that we were all more confirm'd in our Belief of another World! And were so wise as to *consider our latter End*: Or, as it may be read, our *Future State*. Then should we pass more safely and comfortably *through* this World, and at length *out of it*.

Deut.
32. 29.

'Tis sad to see many, even when they are under the sensible Symptoms of their approaching change, and already taken into the custody of Death's Messengers, still full of this Life, solicitous about it, in love with it, and very loth to think of parting with it, or to hear talk of another. Our deceased Father has set us a better Example, and by his weanedness from this Life, shew'd how much his Eye and Heart were upon another. Often has he charg'd his Friends, those at a distance by Letter, and those about him by Word of Mouth, not to pray for the continuance of his Life; tho' it was as far, as any Man's of his Age, from being made either *uneasy* to himself, or *unprofitable* to others: By which it appears, he was full of Days. *Satur Dierum*: According to that Promise made to them, who set their love

on God, with Long-life was he satisfy'd : And what *Psal.*
 was the Language of Job's Corruptions concern- *91. 16.*
 ing his Present State, was the Language of his
 Graces; *I loath it, I would not live always in this Job 7.*
 World, having a desire to depart and to be with *16.*
 Christ, which is far better.

Secondly, That in the other Life, There is a
 State of perfect and perpetual Bliss, prepar'd for, and
 secured to all good Christians, that live and dye in
 the Fear of GOD, and in the Faith of CHRIST.
 The Eternal Life, the Text speaks of, is not only
 an Immortal Being; the Damned in Hell shall
 have that for the perpetuating of their Misery,
their Worm dies not, therefore they dye not; But
 an Immortal Blessedness, adequate to the enlarg'd
 Capacities, and commensurate to the never-fail-
 ing Duration of that Immortal Being.

We may firmly believe it upon the Credit of
 Eternal Truth, which all the Saints in all Ages
 have set their Seals to, and ventur'd their Souls
 upon; That all those, who by a patient continu- *Rom.*
 ance in well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour and Im- *2. 7.*
 mortality, shall obtain Eternal Life. There is an
 Everlasting Perfection of Joy and Satisfaction,
 which all those that are duly prepar'd for it in
 this World, shall certainly be put in the posses-
 sion of in the other World, consisting in the im-
 mediate Vision, and compleat Fruition of GOD,
 as their GOD; A Crown of Immortal Glory, that
 will never wither; A Kingdom that cannot be
 mov'd; An Inheritance, such as never was on Earth;
 no, not in Canaan; no, not in Eden itself; incorrup- *1 Pet.*
 tible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserv'd in *1. 4.*
 Heaven for all Obedient Believers; the Prospect
 of which, is now a sufficient Balance; and the
 Enjoyment of which, will then be an abundant
 Recompence of all their Services, Sufferings,
 and Self-denials; all their Toils, all their Grievs,
 all their Losses, Heaven will make amends
 for all.

And do we indeed believe this? Why then are we so careless to make sure our Title to this Happiness? Why do we take so little pains to *work out our Salvation*? Why do we so eagerly pursue the good things of this World, as if they were the best Things, and rest in them as if they were our Portion and our Heritage for ever? Have we any good Hope, through Grace, of this Happiness, why then do we go mourning from Day to Day under the Burthen of worldly Crosses, as if the *Glory to be revealed*, had not enough in it to countervail the *Sufferings of this present time*? Let the Experiences of the Saints, who have not only been kept from fainting by believing that they shall see the Goodness of the Lord in that Land of the Living, but in the Prospect of it, have been enabled to rejoice in Tribulation, direct and encourage us to build our Hope on the same Foundation, and draw our Joy from the same Fountain.

Rom.
8. 18.

Ps. 27.
13.

Thirdly, That our present State is a State of Expectation; even the Greatest and Best Saints in this World, are still looking for something yet to come, which will make them Greater and Better. 'Tis certainly true, we are not yet enter'd into Rest, we are not at Home; How well soever it is with us in this World, and how easy, soever, and well-pleas'd we are in our present State, there is still something we are to look for, and wait for; something above this World, something beyond it: The Best are not so Holy as they would be, nor reckon themselves to have attained, or to be already perfect; but they are still pressing forwards towards the Mark: The most comforted, are not so Happy as they would be, and expect to be, when that which is perfect is come. They that deal with GOD, deal upon Trust, for something out of sight and in Reversion after one Life; and must wait till the Harvest for

Phil.
3. 13.

for the return of their Seed, and till the Evening for the Reward of their Work, *not of Debt, but of Free-Grace.*

With what a *generous Contempt* should we look down upon the Body and the World, if this Truth were duly consider'd? *What have we here? And whom have we here?* that we should call this our Rest. Tho' the Human Soul is conscious to itself of an innate Inclination to its *Body*, yet the sanctify'd Soul being touch'd with the Loadstone of Divine Love is conscious to itself of a predominant Inclination to its *G O D*, and its Kindred in the Upper-World, and therefore even in the Body, when it acts like itself, and agreeable to the Principles of its New Nature, it complains it is not in its Centre, in its Element; it is not *what* it would be, nor *where* it would be: Instead of reposing itself and being pleas'd, it groans, being *burthen'd*, longing to be *absent from the Body*, as well as it loves it, that it may be *present with the Lord*. The Delights of Sense, and all the Amusements and Entertainments this Earth can afford, are the despis'd Crowds through which the Soul, thus big with Expectation, *presseth forward* in pursuit of everlasting Joys. Even holy Ordinances, tho' a Day in them is better than a thousand elsewhere on Earth, yet they are but the *High-ways* through which we pass along to this Eternal Life, and go *from strength to strength*, till we appear before God in the Heavenly *Jerusalem*: They are but Means in order to a further End, in the use of which we are still *looking*, still *waiting* for the Consolation of *Israel*.

This Faithful Servant of GOD was much in this expecting *Frame*, that Text on which he preach'd at my Father's Funeral almost 12 Years ago, he seem'd to have much upon his Heart, and oft *Rom.* repeated it, *Who have the First-fruits of the S. 23.*

Lam.
3.26.

Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption. And the last Sermon he preach'd the Day before he sicken'd, and not 20 Days before his Death was to the same Purpose, on those Words of the lamenting Prophet, *It is good that a Man should both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord*; I perceive by the Notes of it, it was newly meditated; he intimates towards the Close, that he had been *upheld many Years* by that Hoping, and quiet Waiting for Divine Salvation, and had found *Peace, and holy Security in that way*; and his Notes conclude with *Hab. 2. 3, 4. The Vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and shall not lye; tho' it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Thus did he encourage his own Faith and Patience to hold out yet a little while; and his last Breath here, concurr'd with that of the dying Patriarch, when he was blessing his Sons, *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

Gen.
49. 18.

Fourthly, That we have all need of Divine Mercy, are for ever undone without it, and must depend upon that for all the Good we hope for, here or hereafter. We must never expect Life, much less *Eternal Life*, but *through Mercy, infinite Mercy.* We all *lye at God's Mercy*, he has all the Advantages both of Law and Strength against us, our Destruction would be no Wrong or Injustice to us, no Difficulty or Loss to him: We are Sinners, miserable Sinners; are charg'd with Guilt, and cannot deny the Charge, cannot confess and justify, cannot give security to answer the Law; nor have we any Arts to evade either its Cognizance, or its Sentence; we have no Plea to put in that will stand us in any stead; Tho' we thought ourselves *righteous*, yet durst we not answer; for GOD knows that ill by us which

Job. 9.
15.

we know not by ourselves, and therefore we must make Supplication to our Judge, and cast ourselves intirely

entirely upon his Mercy; which we need not be afraid to do, for he has proclaim'd his Name *Gracious and Merciful*, and is particularly pleas'd with those that *hope in his Mercy*, and in obedience to his Will humbly refer themselves to it. Psal. 33. 18.

All our Comfort and Happiness we must look for from the Mercy of GOD, that Mercy which is so oft said to *endure for ever*, because the Fruits of it are everlasting. The chosen Vessels are said to be *Vessels of Mercy*; And the People that are taken into Covenant with GOD, are said to *obtain Mercy*. 'Tis according to his Mercy, that he hath saved us, and hath begotten us again to a lively Hope. Blessed Paul himself attributes both his Fidelity, and his Constancy to Divine Mercy; *I obtain'd Mercy of the Lord to be faithful; and as we have receiv'd Mercy we faint not*. Thus even the New Testament which brings in the *Everlasting Righteousness*, yet teacheth us still to have an Eye to *Everlasting Mercy*, for Pardon, and Peace for Grace and Glory. The poor Publican's Prayer, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, is what the best Saints have set their heartiest *Amen* to, and have blessed GOD, that we find it upon Record in the Gospels as an answer'd Prayer, and that he that pray'd it with a humble, broken, penitent and obedient Heart *went to his House justified*. Rom. 9. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 10. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 7. 25. 2 Cor. 4. 1. Luke 18. 13.

Thus this good Man finish'd his Course, under a deep Sense of his need of the Mercy of GOD. I shall not forget with what Solemnity he said to me, when I was with him a few Days before he dy'd, and he was so weak, that he could say but little; *Here I lye endeavouring to renew my Repentance for all my Sins, from my beginning to this Day, and I would not think, that my Weakness and Age should excuse me from the Exercise of Repentance*. And when I was praying by him, that GOD would support and strengthen him, he softly put me doff
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doff
doff
me

me in mind to pray, *that his sins might be forgiven him.* 'Tis related, both of *St. Austin*, and *Arch-Bishop Usher*; those two great Men in the Day, that on their Death-beds they lamented their sins of Omission. Those who thus humble themselves shall be exalted.

Fifthly, That it is only from Christ, and through Christ, and in Christ; that we poor Sinners can be so find Mercy. The Mercy we must be sav'd by, if we be sav'd, is the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; 'tis that we must have an Eye to, 'tis that we must depend upon for *Eternal Life*: Mercy put into the Hand of a Mediatour, procur'd by him for us, conferr'd by him upon us; He receiv'd the Gifts of Mercy for Men, He gave them, *Ps. 68.* Gifts of Mercy to Men, even the *Rebellious*. The Father hath set him at his *Right-Hand*; for by him he reacheth forth his Mercy to the Children of Men, and he is so intirely intrusted with the Disposal, that it is call'd his Mercy.

The Mercy of Christ appears very illustrious in his whole Undertaking from first to last. 'Twas in his Love, and in his Pity that he redeem'd us, that he took this Ruin under his Hand: He assumed our Nature, that he might be touch'd with a compassionate feeling of our Infirmities. All his Miracles were Acts of Mercy as well as Acts of Power, and Instances of his Kindness and Good-will towards Men. All the Invitations he gave to poor Sinners to come to him, and the Promises he has made for their Encouragement are the Breathings of his Mercy. In all his Offices, his Mercy shines: Is he a Prophet?

Heb. 5. 2. He can have compassion on the Ignorant; and they that learn of him, will find him meek and lowly.

Is he a Priest? He is a Merciful as well as Faithful High-Priest: Is he a King? He comes to us meekly and having Salvation.

Zech. 9. 9. 'Tis the Mercy of the Redeemer

deem'd

emer that runs through the whole Work of redemption, and is the Support and Joy of the redeemed. The Apostle speaks of the *Meekness* 2 Cor. 10. 1. and *Gentleness* of Christ, as one of the most precious and powerful Considerations with all good Christians, by which they ought to be influenci'd much as by any thing.

The great Design of the Gospel is to exalt Christ, by shewing, that all the Favours we are to expect from GOD pass through his hands; and we are beholden to him for them. *It is through his Blood, that we receive forgiveness of Sins; He is our Peace, and from his Fullness we receive Grace for Grace.* The Father has committed not only all Judgment, but all Mercy to the Son, that all Men might honour the Son; by applying themselves to him and resting on him; to whom the Father has given Power over all Flesh, John 17. 2. for a purpose, that he might give Eternal Life; and all the Preparatives for it, and Earnests of it to many as were given him. Would we receive Mercy, we must go to CHRIST for it; for he is all in All. All our Springs are in him, and we must acknowledge our Obligations not only to his Merit, but to his Mercy; and that great Love wherewith he loved us; For 'tis owing to his rich Mercy, that we have Interest in his Merit, and Benefit by it, and this we ought to be made more and more sensible of that we may find ourselves ever engag'd to love him, and live to him; and to cast all our Crowns at his Feet. Thus is boasting effectually excluded, and all Flesh forbidden to glory in his Presence. It is of the Lord's Mercies, the Lord CHRIST's Mercies that we are not consum'd, that we are not Fire-brands in Hell; Lam. 3. 22. and 'tis because his Compassions fail not, and are new every Morning, that we continue hitherto, that we are supported under our Burthens; comforted

forted in our Sorrows, have our daily Infirmities pardon'd, and the willingness of the Spirit accepted, notwithstanding the weakness of the Flesh: And if ever we get to Heaven, that must be call'd the *Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which will eternally mind the glorify'd Saints how *miserable* they had been if **CHRIST** had not stood their Friend. The best Man in the World when he comes to have his everlasting State determin'd, will certainly be undone if **CHRIST** be not merciful to him. And therefore St. Paul prays for *Onesiphorus*, who by his Charity had lent to the **L O R D**, not that he might have Justice done him, but that he might find *Mercy of the Lord in that Day*. If the *merciful* be blessed, 'tis not because they are Men of Merit, but because they obtain *Mercy with the Lord J E S U S*; Son of David, *have mercy on us*; Jesus Master, *have mercy on us*; must be the Breathings of our Souls, even to the last; living, dying, and in the Judgment.

2 Tim.
1. 18.

Matth.
5. 7.

This was it that our deceas'd Father was full of: To him to live was **CHRIST**; the Mercy of **CHRIST**, and the Merit of **CHRIST**: 'Twas but a few Weeks before he dy'd, that he gave this *Thesis* to a Candidate for the Ministry, to be maintain'd at his Tryal for his Ordination, *Iustitia qua coram Deo sistimus est Iustitia Christi Mediatoris*, and express'd himself much affected with it. That we cannot appear before **G O D** in any Righteousness of our own, but **CHRIST**'s Merit, is our only Righteousness, and for that we are ever indebted to his *Mercy*. *None but Christ; none but Christ.*

Sixthly, That the *Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ* is as necessary to the finishing of the Work of our *Salvation*, as it was to the beginning of it. We not only receive the Mercy of **CHRIST** in our *Justification*, *Sanctification* and present *Comforts*, but

ut we look for it still, even unto *Eternal Life*; we depend upon that to bring us to Heaven, to preserve us to that Kingdom, and to present us faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding joy.

Christ's Mercy may be look'd for even to *Eternal Life*; for whom he loves, he loves to the end, loves them into Heaven that World of Everlasting Love; for his Gifts and Callings are without Repentance. The Vessels of Mercy shall be Vessels of Honor; and tho' they commit Iniquity, they shall be brought to Repentance, so that Mercy shall not depart from them. Grace in the Soul is the Work of God's own Hands, which he will not forsake, because his Mercy endures forever, and he will perfect that which concerns us. As for God his Work is perfect; it began in mere Mercy, rescuing a Malefactor from Death, but that Mercy will proceed till it Crowns a Friend and Favourite with endless Glory. *This Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

Let this Mercy therefore be depended upon to the last, and let us have our Eye ever towards it; let not the strongest and most experienc'd Christians think their own Hands sufficient for them, or imagine that if Christ's Mercy will but help them so far, they can then shift for themselves; no, if that Mercy be not drawn out to *Eternal Life*, we are undone. If the same that is the Author, be not the Finisher of our Faith and Hope, they will never be perfected in Vision, and Fruition. If Goodness and Mercy do not follow us all our Days, even to the last, we shall never reach to dwell in the House of the Lord. To it therefore let us commit the great Trust, against that Day, and depend upon the same kind and mighty Hand that laid the Foundation of this great Work, and fasten'd the Corner-stone of

Tim.

1. 18.

Jude

24.

John

13. 1.

2 Sam.

7. 15.

Psalm

138. 8.

Psalm

23. 6.

Zech. 4. 7. of it at length to bring forth the Top-stone with showings, and Eternity itself will be short enough to be spent in crying, *Grace, Grace to it.*

And thus I have briefly touch'd upon those great Truths, to which it should seem this faithful Witness design'd to bear his dying Testimony in choosing this Text, and we know that his witness is true, and I hope we believe, not for his saying only, but that we have heard them our selves, tasted the Sweetness, and felt the Power of them in our own Hearts, which is the most convincing Evidence to us of the Truth of 'em.

But if indeed we receive these Truths in the Light and Love of them.

1. Let us bless God, that they are so clearly reveal'd to us in the Scripture. Blessed are our Eyes for they see the joyful Light, our Ears for they hear the joyful sound of Christ and Heaven, things not only hid from the wise and prudent that despis'd them, but from Prophets and Kings that desir'd to see them, and might not. Bless God that we see *Eternal Life* set before us and not set out of our reach, while we see Christ undertaking for us, able to save to the uttermost, and as willing as he is able.

Luke 10. 21. 24. Let us therefore give Diligence to get the Knowledge of these great Things, and grow in our Acquaintance with them: Let us more firmly believe the Gospel-Doctrines concerning Christ and Heaven, for they are faithful Sayings, and more familiarly converse with them, for they are worthy of all Acceptation. Let Men of Learning learn Christ; let Men of Business understand this Business; for without this the learnedst Men at their end will be Fools; and the richest Men at their end will be Beggars, Beggers in vain. The Gospel of Christ is the same

to the Wise and the Unwise, to the Greek and the Barbarian. The greatest Wits and Statesmen are not above the Knowledge of CHRIST and Heaven, and that Knowledge is not above the Capacity of the meanest that seek it faithfully. *Deut. 32. 46.* Set your Hearts therefore unto all the words which are testified among you this Day, for believe it, they are matters of Life and Death.

2. Let us bless GOD that they are so well attested by the Experiences of Wise and Good Men. Tho' our Faith stands not upon any Humane Testimony, yet it is an Encouragement to us to venture our Souls upon the same bottom, that so many have to their unspeakable Satisfaction, ventur'd theirs: Some that have travers'd the vast Region of Human Learning, have own'd with Solomon, that the increase of it, has been but the increase of Sorrow, and they have found no true Joy, but in the Doctrine of CHRIST. Mr. Selden was confessedly, one of the greatest Scholars of his Age, and on his Death-bed express'd himself to this purpose to Archbishop Usher: That he had in his time taken a great deal of pains in searching after Knowledge, had survey'd most parts of the Learning of the Sons of Men; but in all the Books and Manuscripts he was Master of, he found nothing wherein he could rest his Soul, save the Holy Scripture, and that Passage was especially comfortable to him, *The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present World, looking for the blessed Hope.* *Tic. 2. 11, 12.* We have now parted with One that was as well acquainted with Books and Men, and had improv'd as much by that Acquaintance, as perhaps any Man I ever knew; yet he counts all but Loss, that he may know Christ,

Christ, and win Christ, and be found in him; and that which you see gave him the greatest Satisfaction in his Dying-moments, was an Expectation of the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.

Look upon it as the Testimony of a Minister, who has often in CHRIST's Name call'd upon you to *lay hold on Eternal Life*; and to make that sure: Now you see he urg'd you to nothing else, but what he did himself: He directed you to CHRIST and his Mercy, and there he repos'd himself. Therefore the Ministry is committed to *Men like ourselves*, because they having Souls to save as well as we, we may hope, they will deal for our Souls as for their own, and direct us to build upon no other Foundation than what they themselves build upon; and will speak, what they themselves have seen, and testify what they have themselves known. Your Ministers that are gone, embark'd for another World in the same Bottom which they have often perswaded you to embark in, and have thereby shew'd they were in earnest with you.

1 John
5. 11.

But if we receive the Witness of Men, the Witness of GOD is greater; Men may be deceiv'd, but GOD cannot: By Faith receive his Testimony, and so set to your Seal that He is true: *And this is the Record, 'tis the Sum Total which all I have said amounts to, That God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son.*

Secondly, I come now to consider this Text as recommended to us with design not only to express the workings of his Heart towards CHRIST and Heaven, but to impress the like workings on our Hearts. And so the Words come in here as an Exhortation to this Duty of *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The former is in order to this. They who have themselves tasted

tasted of the Mercy and Grace of CHRIST, cannot but desire that others also may taste of it. True Grace hates Monopolies, and desires not to eat its Morsels alone. Sinners entice you to cast in your Lot among them, and tell you, you shall find all precious substance, and fill your houses with spoil; But they lay wait for their own blood, and their End will certainly be bitter as Wormwood; Hearken to the Invitations of the Sons and Heirs of Heaven, and be persuaded to cast in your Lot among them, for yet there is room; In CHRIST and Eternal Life, there's enough for all, enough for each, enough for you, and you will all be welcome. Your Deceased Pastor was himself so fully convinc'd of the Reality and Certainty of unseen Things, that he earnestly desir'd you also might be convinc'd of them, and that none of you might perish in Ignorance and Unbelief concerning them. He had such Pleasure in looking for this Eternal Life, and such Satisfaction in relying on CHRIST for it, that he wish'd you the same Pleasure, the same Satisfaction. It yielded him solid substantial Comfort on his Death-bed, which renew'd the inward Man, even then when the outward Man was decaying. Then he said with thankfulness, that through the Grace of GOD, he had abundance of peace; and that his Heart was as full of Joy as it could hold. Let this incourage you to follow him and others, who are now through Faith and Patience, inheriting the Promises. He had Hope in his Death, and you have reason to think, he is now Happy; be you holy, and you shall be happy too. Heaven is not intended only for good Ministers, but for all good Christians that now have their Conversation in Heaven. The Crown of Righteousness shall be given, not only to such great Men as St. Paul was,

Prov. i.

10, 14.

2 Cor.

4. 16.

2 Tim.
4. 8.

was, but to all those that love Christ's appearing; that love his first appearing, and are thankful for it; his second appearing, and long for it. CHRIST has open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers, and excluded none, that do not exclude themselves; Put in for it therefore, and resolve not to take up short of it. Would you dye the Death of the Righteous? live their Life: Would you have your *Last End* like theirs? Let your present Way be like theirs, Follow their Faith, who made Christ the End of their Conversation, who what he was to them Yesterday, will be the same to us to Day, and to them and us for ever. Whatever you heard or saw in your aged Minister that was Instructive and Exemplary, transcribe it into your own Hearts and Lives, and thus let him still live among you; and then Death which has parted him from you a while, to make you amends, will shortly fetch you to him.

Heb.
13. 7, 8.

When he order'd that this Text should be preach'd upon at his Funeral, he withal gave direction, that I should take some notice of the fore-going Words, and observe something from them, for your Instruction. And, I think, this will be the most proper Place to do it in order to your attaining a well-grounded Hope of Eternal Life. The Context is this, *v. 20, 21. But, ye, beloved building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the Love of God; and then continue looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life. From all which, I shall now in the close, give you some Directions, and I beseech you, suffer the Word of Exhortation, and submit to it. Now tho' Providence hath prepar'd the Ground, (and those Hearts are hard indeed, that will not be soften'd by the Death of Two such Ministers so near together) I would hope, the Seed of the Word might take Root, and bring forth Fruit.* First,

First, Lay a good Foundation in Holy Faith, and the Love of God. This is suppos'd in those Exhortations to *build up our selves on our most Holy Faith*, and to *keep ourselves in the Love of God*. See that you be well principled, that the *Root of Job 19 the Matter* be found in you, else you cannot be ^{28.} fruitful in the Fruits of Righteousness. Let our *Holy Faith in Christ* lead us to the *Love of God*, as reconcil'd to us through him.

Firmly believe the Doctrine of CHRIST, embrace it; rely upon it; be deliver'd into it as into a mold; receive the Impressions of it, and submit to the commanding constraining Power of it. Let your Faith particularly receive CHRIST, and rest upon him as your Prophet, Priest, and King, and resign yourselves to him to be rul'd, and taught, and saved by him. Let it be a *Faith unfeigned*, and not a bare Profession, a Faith that *purifies the Heart*, then it is a *Holy Faith*. The Doctrine we believe is *Holy*, let us be sanctified by it. 'Tis Faith that overcomes the World, quencheth the fiery Darts of Satan, realizeth unseen Things, establiseth the Heart, and keeps us from fainting; *neither Cir-* Gal. 5. *cumcision avails any Thing, nor Uncircumcision*, but ^{6.} this Holy Faith is all in all. We have no Benefit by Divine Revelation, that great Blessing of the World, without Faith, no more than we have by the Light of the Sun without Eyes. The Word preached will not profit, if it be not Heb. *mixed with Faith.* 4. 2.

Let this Faith *Work by Love*, such a reigning Love of GOD in your Hearts, as will eat out all sinful Self-love, and the Love of the World, and will kindle in you a Holy Fire of Devotion to GOD, and Zeal for his Honor in every Thing; such a Love as will make the keeping of all his Commandments easie to you, and particularly

that of Brotherly Love; get this *Love shed abroad in your Hearts by the Holy Ghost*, and do all you do in Religion from that Principle.

Ver. 18, 19. *Secondly, Build upon this Foundation, else in vain was the Foundation laid. Ye beloved, who have escap'd the Snares of the Scorners, he is speaking of in the Verses before, and are contending for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, think it not enough, that you have and hold the true Religion, but be still building up yourselves on your most Holy Faith.*

Gal. 6. 9. *Proceed upon the good Principles that through Grace are laid, and act in Conformity to them, as those that in all you say and do are govern'd by Conscience, and the Fear and Love of GOD. Proceed in the good Practises you have begun, and never grow weary of well doing. You have still need of Helps for your Souls, blest GOD there are such to be had who will build, and will help you to build up yourselves upon the good Foundations of Faith and Love, which your Ministers that are gone have laid among you.*

2 John 8. *Go forth therefore, and go on in the Strength of CHRIST, in the Work and Warfare of your Christianity. Be daily improving in Knowledge, in Wisdom, in every Grace, and reckon not yourselves to have apprehended. You have daily Lessons to learn, be getting forward in your Learning: Daily Work to do, be still doing it, and rid ground in your Journey Heaven-wards. Have you begun well? Let nothing hinder you; Have you gone on well hitherto? Lose not the Things which you have wrought, the Things which you have gain'd. We are clogg'd with so many Corruptions, and surrounded with so many Temptations, that if we do not get ground, we certainly lose ground; like a Boat on the River,*
if

if it be not row'd up the Stream, it will of it self go down the Stream. *Non progredi est regredi.* Aim high therefore, and Press forward; having such a prize set before you, run with Patience the Race set before you. Hold fast CHRIST as the Foundation, which will stand the Storm, and then carry your Building as high as Heaven above the Storm. Let your Motto be *Plus ultra.*

Thirldly, Be constant and inward with GOD in Prayer. Would you build up your selves on your most Holy Faith, pray much, and pray in the Holy Ghost, for except the Lord build the spiritual House, they labour in vain that build it. We can do nothing for ourselves of ourselves, but all our Sufficiency is of God, to him therefore we must continually apply ourselves; He hath promis'd Grace to help in every time of Need, but he will for Ezek. this be enquir'd of by the House of Israel. Ask and 36. 37. it shall be given you, not otherwise: Ask in Faith, ask in Earnest, ask and seek by Endeavour, ask and knock with Constancy and Importunity; as becomes Jacob's Seed, and Jacob's GOD will not let it be in vain. By Prayer give Glory to GOD, and then you may expect to receive Grace from him, and would be every way better did you pray more, and more to the Purpose. Let all your Comforts draw you, and all your Crosses drive you to your Knees, and especially let your Deficiencies in Faith engage you to pray for the Increase of it, and the fulfilling of the Work of Faith with Power. You would Profit more by the Word of Faith, if you did pray more for a Blessing upon it. You will not sit down to Meat, why then will you sit down to a Sermon, the Food of your Souls without craving a Blessing. Praying contributes no less to our Edification in Faith, than Hearing doth,

look what more, for it engageth GOD on our side.

Rom. 8. 27. And whenever you pray, see that it be *in the Holy Ghost*; pray, under the Spirits influence and Operation, who *maketh Intercession in us*, and helps our praying Infirmities. Let *your Spirits* be employ'd in the Duty, and in order thereunto see it necessary to depend upon GOD's Spirit. 'Tis not his Inspiration, as a Spirit of Prophecy that we are to expect, but his Conduct and Strength, his Light and Heat, as a *Spirit of Adoption*, a Spirit of Grace and Supplication.

Fourthly, Take heed of every thing that tends to quench the Fire of Holy Love, and would cast you out of GOD's Favour. This is intended in that Branch of the Exhortation, *Keep yourselves in the Love of GOD.* We must not only Pray, but Watch, and make it our constant Care and Endeavour to preserve both the *good Work of GOD in us*, and the *good Will of GOD towards us*.

Let us keep ourselves *in Love with GOD*, as the most beautiful Being and the most bountiful Benefactor. Take heed of every Thing, that would hinder the Operations of this Love. Let not the Pleasures of a prosperous Condition *draw off your Love from GOD*, nor divert it to lying Vanities: Nor let the Sorrows of an afflicted Condition *cool your Love towards GOD*, nor occasion you to entertain any hard Thoughts of him. The Love of GOD is that Fire on the Altar, with which all our Sacrifices must be kindled; let it not go out for want of being blown, and stirr'd up by *pious and devout Meditations on the Grace of GOD*, which are the Fuel of *pious and devout Affections*.

Let us keep our Interest in *the Love of GOD*, and beware of saying or doing any thing to forfeit

feit it. Has GOD graciously condescended to take you into Covenant and Communion with himself; be sure you *keep his Commandments*, that you may *abide in his Love*; and may not *lose or lessen your Interest in him*. Carefully avoid Sin, all appearances of it, and approaches to it for fear of offending GOD, and incurring his Displeasure. You are upon your good Behaviour, see that you behave yourselves well, *that no Man take your Crown*. If you *throw yourselves out of GOD's Love*, to whom will you betake yourselves? You have lost your best Friend, have made him your Enemy, and who then can befriend you? Be solicitous therefore to please GOD, and let it be the top of your Ambition to be *accepted of him*. Keep in the way of your Duty: Keep close to Holy Ordinances, and live in Brotherly Love, then you *keep yourselves in the Love of GOD*.

John
15. 10.

Keep one another in the Love of GOD; so it may be read; Watch over one another; Edifie one another; do all you can to prevent others from falling into Sin, and to recover them from it; to *provoke one another to Love and to good Works*, and not to provoke one anothers Passions; let Hand join in Hand to promote every Thing that's good, that you may strengthen and encourage one another in all the Instances of Holy Love, and so may *keep one another in the Love of GOD*: 'Twas Cain that said, *Am I my Brother's keeper*.

2 Cor.
5. 9.

Heb.
10. 24.

Fifthly, Lay hold on Eternal Life; 'tis set before you not only as the visible Heavens to be look'd upon, but as a Prize to be run for, and fought for: 'Tis offer'd to you; it may be yours upon very easie Terms, it will be your's unless you *put it away from you*. Many a time you have had the offers of it made you, and now

1 Tim.
6. 12.

Acts
13. 46.

once more : Give not sleep to your Eyes, nor slumber to your Eye-lids, till you have through Grace made sure your Title to it. Believe the Reality of it; Prefer it before all the Delights of Sense and Time : Consent to the Conditions upon which it is offer'd: Be willing to part with all for it : Set your Hearts upon it, and keep it always in your Eye.

'Tis Life (my Brethren) 'tis the Life of your Souls, 'tis Eternal Life that you are urg'd to *lay hold on*. A Life on 't other side Death; but a Life that has no Death on 't other side it. Your present Lives are *dying* Lives, and so are the Lives of all your Friends; the Lives of your Ministers, you see are so : We cannot take any *fast hold* of this Life, or of any of the Enjoyments of it: Place your Happiness therefore in *Eternal Life*, seek and secure it there. Your Ministers that preach'd to you *the Words of that Life*, are one after another gone before you to the enjoyment of it: Let their Death do that which their Life has not done, to draw your Hearts *upwards, upwards* towards GOD; *forwards, forwards* towards Heaven.

Sixthly, Let Jesus Christ be All in All to you. In every thing wherein you have to do with GOD, depend upon *the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and in all things let him have the pre-eminence with you. Remember, you are Christians; but in vain are you call'd so, if you rest in meer Natural Religion, and relish not the truth, *as it is in Jesus*. If CHRIST be of *no account* Gal. 5. with you, *Christ will be of no effect to you*; and 4. then you are undone. If you leave CHRIST out of your Religion, who is indeed the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of it, what Comfort can you find in it? What Benefit can you expect from it here or hereafter? If you look for that in yourselves, that

that Righteousness, and that Strength, which is to be had in CHRIST only, you must thank yourselves when the Disappointment proves fatal. He that is sinking, if he embrace himself, perisheth; but if he lays hold on the Hand reach'd out to him, he may be help'd. You are Disciples of CHRIST, devoted to CHRIST, Dependants on CHRIST, As therefore you have received him, Col. 2. 6. so walk in him: you have need of him daily, make daily use of him. He is the true Christian, in whom Christ is formed, and he the growing Gal. 4. 19. Christian, that grows up into Christ in all things. Eph. 4. 15. Your Ministers were of St. Paul's Spirit, to whom to live was Christ, to preach CHRIST; nor did they desire to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Let the 1 Cor. 2. 2. same mind therefore be in you, and whatever you do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Col. 3. 17. Lord Jesus. Live upon the Mercy of CHRIST; see yourselves lost without it; and cast yourselves upon it: Let that be your Stay, and stay yourselves upon it; let that be your Comfort, and comfort yourselves with it. Be ready to own your Dependance on CHRIST, and your Obligations to him, CHRIST is a Christian's All, And therefore, blessed be GOD for JESUS CHRIST. Let that be the burthen of every Song.

Lastly, Live in the believing Hopes and Expectations of Eternal Life, through the Mercy of Christ. If by the Grace of GOD, you have taken some care, some pains to make it sure, I hope, I speak to many that have done it; take the comfort of it. Be still looking for the Mercy of our Lord JESUS CHRIST to Eternal Life; and with patience wait for it. Let actual Thoughts and Expectations of Eternal Life, be the daily Entertainment of your Souls. Look upon it as real, as near, as yours; and please yourselves with the

the prospect of it. How often do our foolish idle Fancies build us Castles in the Air, and please us with the Imagination of things uncertain, unlikely, impossible! When at the same time, if We would set our Faith on work, that would entertain us with the delightful Contemplation of a Real Bliss, which we shall very shortly be in the possession of; and which will so far exceed our present Conceptions of it, that we need not fear, lest (as it is with the things of this World) the rais'd Expectation of them, should be a Draw-back upon the Enjoyment of them, and lessen the Pleasure of it. But on the contrary, the more we converse with it in Faith and Hope, the better prepar'd we shall be for it, and the more will the Capacities of the sanctify'd Soul be enlarg'd to take in those Joys. - What! Sirs, Do we hope to be in Heaven quickly, to be there eternally! and yet think so seldom of it, and please ourselves so little with the fore-sight of its Glories, and the fore-taste of its Pleasures! Let us raise our Expectations, for the Things are neither doubtful, nor distant, nor despicable; but sure, and great, and very near: And the Hope of them, if built on CHRIST, will not make us ashamed.

2 Cor.
4. 18.

1 John
3. 3.

Let our Hopes and Expectations of Eternal Life, wean us from this World, and take our Affections off from it: What an inconsiderable Point is this Earth, to One that has his Conversation in Heaven! How trifling are the *Things that are seen, that are Temporal* and Transitory, to One that keeps his Eye and Heart on *the Things that are not seen, that are Eternal*. Let this Hope purify us from all the Pollutions of Sin, and pacify all the Tumults of our Spirits, that we may be found of Christ in peace. Let it engage and quicken us to the utmost Diligence in the Service of GOD: 'Tis sure

are worth while, to take pains in that Work, which no less than Eternal Life will be the Remuneration of. Do we hope for the *Mercy of Christ*? Let us then put on, as the Elect of GOD, the *Robes of Compassion*, and upon all occasions, *show Mercy*, as those that hope to find *Mercy*. And since Temporal Death, must be our passage to this Eternal Life, let our Expectations of it, not only take off the Terror of Death, but make it welcome to us. Why should we make any difficulty of putting off the earthly House of this Tabernacle, in order to our Removal to the House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens; rather let us hasten to meet with Chearfulness that Messenger which will fetch us to *Life*; tho' it come under the Name of *Death*; and all the Days of our appointed Time, continue waiting till it come with reference to the Burthens and Troubles of this Life, waiting with a *holy Patience*; and yet with reference to the Joy set before us, (if I may so speak) with a *holy Impatience*: Why are his Chariot-wheels so long a coming? Let us have our Eye to this Eternal Life, when we pray Daily, Father in Heaven, *Hallowed be thy Name; Thy Kingdom come.* —

Short Account of the LIFE O F

Mr. Francis Tallents.

IF my Information be right, his Grandfather was a Frenchman, and was brought over into England by Sir Francis Leak, (whose Descendants were Lords Deincourt, and afterwards Earls of Scarfsdale) who did honourably for him, because in France upon some occasion or other, he had been instrumental to save his Life. *Patria est ubicunque bene est.*

Our Mr. Tallents was born in November, 1619. at a little Town call'd Pelsley, not far off Chesterfield, in Darbyshire.

There is this remarkable concerning his Family; that his Parents who were religious good People both dy'd, when their Children were very young; He who

was the Eldest of Six, was then but Fourteen Years of Age; but of all those Six Children, not one dy'd of above

Seventy Years after: But (be it observed to the Glory of GOD, as the Orphans GOD whose Providence takes up, when Father and Mother forsake) they all liv'd in Reputation and Comfort were eminently Religious, and considering what was left among them, wonderfully prosper'd in the World.

His Father's Eldest Brother, whose Name he bore, was a Clergy-man, and was a wise and tender Father to these Orphans; He was first Chaplain to my Lord Deincourt, and Tutor to his Sons, and was afterwards presented

presented by him to a good Living; this Nephew of his, and another he bred Scholars. The other was Mr. Phillip Tallents, a very worthy Conformist in Lincolnshire, who dy'd not long since, and an intire and close Affection there was between the Two Brothers, notwithstanding the difference of their Sentiments in some Things.

His Uncle sent him first to the Free-School, at Mansfield, afterwards to that at Newark, where he made such great progress in Learning, that one of his Masters sent his Uncle word, he was *not a Silver, but a golden Talent*.

He spoke sometimes of a Sermon he heard, when he was very young, on these Words, *Pf. 119. 113. I hate vain Thoughts*; which much affected him, and gave him occasion to ask a good Grandmother he had, *Whether the Devil could know our Thoughts?* And he was much satisfy'd, when she told him, *No: GOD only knoweth our Thoughts*.

When he was about 16 Years of Age, he was sent to Cambridge by his Uncle, and was enter'd first in Peter-House; but after some time, he was remov'd thence, whilst he was Under-Graduate, to Magdalen-College, to be Sub-Tutor to two or three Sons of the Earl of Suffolk, who, we think, were successively Earls of Suffolk, and the third, the present Earl.

Soon after he came to Magdalen-College, it pleas'd GOD to call him by his Grace, and to reveal his Son in him. I find not any Account of the Work of GOD upon his Heart, under his own Hand, which were to be wish'd, nor can I recollect the steps of it, as he has sometimes related them to me. He sometimes said, pleasantly to his Friends, When I began to be Serious, I soon became a *notorious Puritan*; for which I bless GOD's Holy Name.

I have heard him speak of the strong Temptations to Infidelity, with which he was assaulted, and which for some time he grappled with; but by Divine Grace he

he got over them. 'Twas an easy thing (would he say) to believe the Being of GOD, and his Providence and the Principles of Natural Religion; but to believe that JESUS CHRIST, who was crucify'd at Jerusalem, is the Son of GOD, and my Redeemer and Saviour; and to rest upon him alone for Righteousness and Life; this is a hard thing. But this was in which he was all his Days abundantly fill'd with, and more and more confirm'd in, That CHRIST is All in All. There was nothing which he more frequently, nor more earnestly press'd in all his Preaching, than this, as having himself experienc'd not only the Comfort of it, but the Power and Efficacy of it to promote Sanctification and a Holy Life. *CHRIST is the Life of our Souls, and the Foundation of all true Religion: And yet if we look into the World, and much more into our own Hearts, we shall find that we are least acquainted with Him, and are easily drawn from Him: We are apt to rest upon our own Works, to trust in our own Strength and Righteousness: Nature in some sort teacheth us to do many good Things; and when we do amiss, to be sorry for it, and to ask pardon of GOD, because he is Good and Merciful; and thus we hope to be accepted of GOD, tho' we lay aside CHRIST, if not in Words, yet in the Actings of our Souls and Spirits, whereas we are made accepted only in the Beloved; and no Pardon and Salvation is to be had, but by JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD. To cleave to CHRIST alone and live by him, is both honourable, and pleasing to GOD, and makes us have high thoughts of Forgiveness of Sins, and Acceptance with GOD: And without this, we are e'en fit to turn Quakers. He call'd it a golden Saying of St. Austin's, *In causâ duorum Hominum per quorum unum sub peccato venditi sumus, per alterum liberamur, tota consistit Christiana Religio.* And quoted Damasus's Creed for it, *In hujus morte & sanguine credimus Emundaveris, &c.**

But to return. About the Year 1642. he went to Travel in France, and other Foreign Parts, as Tutor

to the Earl of *Suffolk's* Sons, and as I think was abroad with them above two Years; there he improv'd himself very much with the Conversation of the Learned Men he met with; and was always very Communicative of the Observations he made. I have often heard him say, that what he saw abroad with his own eyes of the *Popish* Religion, and what Conferences he had with its Advocates, added much to his Conviction of the Falseness and Wickedness of it, and confirm'd him in the *Protestant* Religion.

Upon his Return from his Travels, he was made Fellow of *Magdalen* College, by the Interest of the Earl of *Suffolk*. Dr. *Fuller* in his History of the University of *Cambridge*, saith, That the Mastership of that College is neither in the Gift of the Crown, nor the choice of the College, but at the disposal of the Earls of *Suffolk*, Hereditary Patrons of that Foundation. He afterwards became *Senior Fellow*, and *President*, or *Vice-Master* of the College. Having entred upon his Fellowship, he became an eminent Tutor in the College, among many others, very many, Sir *Robert Sawyer* afterwards *Attorney General* was his Pupil, and Dr. *Burton*.

In the latter End of the Year 1645, he began to preach in *Cambridge*. His first Sermon (as I take it) was on *Rom. 8. 31. What shall we then say to these Things?* &c. in which he endeavour'd to encourage others with the Doctrine of *CHRIST's* Mediation, which had been so great a Support and Comfort to him; over that Sermon, as one that aim'd to be an experimental Preacher, he wrote those Words of the Psalmist, when he had obtain'd the Joy of *GOD's* Salvation. *Then will I teach Transgressors thy Ways, and Sinners shall be converted unto thee.* He preach'd often in the College Chappel, and at *St. Mary's*.

He was solemnly ordain'd to the Ministry at *London*, Nov. 29. 1648. in the Parish Church of *St. Mary-Wolnoth*, by the third Classical Presbytery in the Province of

of *London*, being call'd (so the Letters of his Ordination run) to the Work of the Ministry in the University of *Cambridge*, as Fellow of *Magdalen College* there. He is therefore solemnly set apart to the Office of Preaching Presbyter, and Work of the Ministry, with Fasting, Prayer, and Imposition of Hands.

The University of *Cambridge*, being authorized by Queen *Elizabeth* to chuse every Year Twelve Doctor or Graduates, that should have Power to preach in all Parts of *England* or *Ireland*, without License from the Ordinaries, Mr. *Tallents* was chosen one of them, and was so empower'd by an Instrument under the University Seal, bearing Date, Oct. 6. 1649.

In the Year 1652. he left the University, and came to *Shrewsbury* to be Minister of *St. Mary's Church*. Being to come into the Country, he refus'd to take his Degree of Batchelor of Divinity (tho' I think he perform'd his Exercises for it) because that might have been an occasion of his being forc'd to take Place of many in the Country, that were his Seniors in the Ministry.

Now he applied himself intirely to the Work of the Ministry, and laid out himself to do good to the Souls of those that were committed to his Charge. And tho' he had been near Twenty Years an Academick, and intimately conversant with all sorts of Learning, yet he preach'd as one that would seem to know nothing but *Jesus Christ and him crucified*, studiously accommodating himself to the Capacities of his Hearers, and delivering to them the great Things of *GOD*, not in the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in the Evidence and Demonstration of the Spirit.

He was much honour'd and respected by all the Ministers of those Parts, and his Judgment and Advice sought and valued by many. The Character Mr. *Baxter* gives of him in his Memoirs, is, "That he was a good Scholar, a godly blameless Divine, and that he was most eminent for extraordinary Prudence."

and Moderation and Peacableness towards all; and we know that this Record is true; and that he was that Just and Righteous Man whom *Solomon* describes, *Prov. 10. 31, 32. Whose Mouth bringeth forth Wisdom,* and whose *Lips, know what is acceptable, what is apposite.*

Soon after he came to *Shrewsbury*, he Married the Daughter of — *Clive of Walford, Esq.* by whom he had one Son, bred a Scholar at *Cambridge*, but did not prove a Comfort to him: Grace doth not always run in the Blood. Here there was Reason to fear it did not: But his Days were not long in the Land.

In the Year 1656. there was a publick Dispute in the Parish Church of *Ellesmere* in *Shropshire*, between Mr. *Porter* (that eminent Divine) Minister of *Whitchurch*, and one Mr. *Haggar* an *Anabaptist*, concerning *Infant-Baptism*, occasion'd by a Sermon Mr. *Porter* had preach'd on that Subject at the Lecture of *Ellesmere*: In which Dispute, Mr. *Tallents* was pitch'd upon to be Moderator: An Account of that Dispute was then Printed, in which it appears that as Mr. *Porter* abundantly confirm'd the Doctrine he had preach'd to the Satisfaction of all indifferent Persons, and plainly made out the Right which the Infant-seed of Believers have to Baptism, and so did his Part as a Disputant, so Mr. *Tallents* did his as *Moderator*; beginning and ending with Prayer; and directing the Progress of the Dispute (which continued five Hours) with Prudence and Candour, that is, like himself.

In the Year 1658. his dear Wife dy'd, after she had liv'd with him but Four or Five Years: Thus is our Mountain shaken many Times, when we think it stands strong, and shall not be mov'd. He buried her in the same Grave, in which he himself was buried Fifty Years after.

When the King was restor'd in the Year 1660. he not only shew'd an intire Satisfaction in that Re-settlement of the Government, after its Foundations had
D been

been long out of Course, and a sincere Affection to the King, as the *Presbyterians* throughout the Kingdom did, but intimated likewise his readiness to conform as far as he could with a good Conscience, to the Changes that were then made in the Church. He therefore read (as I think I have been told) some Parts of the Liturgy at that time.

But when the Act of Uniformity took place on *Bartholomew* Day, 1662. his Conscience being dissatisfied with the Terms of Conformity thereby insisted on, he was necessitated to quit his Place which was his *Livelihood*, and (which was more grievous to him, and many another) his Work and Usefulness which were his *Life*. He hath sometimes observ'd, that before the Wars the *Puritans* generally made a shift to Conform and come into the Church, notwithstanding the hard Usage they foresaw (by the Trouble frequently given to those of that Character) they were likely to meet with in it. To prevent which for the Future, two new Barriers or Fortifications were erected by the Act of Uniformity to keep them out; one was the Declaration, That it is unlawful upon any Pretence whatsoever to take up Arms against the King: And this Fort, they that erected it, about Twenty Six Years after were oblig'd to quit, as not tenable; for when they had broke through it, by joining with those that took up Arms against King *James*, and setting the Prince of *Orange* upon the Throne, they silently took away that Declaration, both out of the Uniformity Act, and that of Corporations, by an Act in the First of King *William* and Queen *Mary*: Trusting to the other as sufficient to answer their Intention, which was the Declaration of an unfeigned Assent and Consent to all, and every Thing contained in the Book entitled, *The Book of Common-Prayer*, &c. (And the Act of Uniformity it self, is the first Article in the Contents of the Book so entitled, and must therefore be unfeignedly Consented to) which Declaration still remains to many

many tender Consciences such an Objection against Conformity, as they cannot get over.

Mr. Tallents as long as he liv'd, generally observ'd *Bartholomew* Day every Year, as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, either publicly, or in private, especially towards his later End; a Day to bring to remembrance, so he us'd to call it. On this Occasion, he sometimes call'd People wisely to consider the Work of God. Consider the Condition of those Ministers that were then Silenced, how they were hated, despis'd, and imprison'd, and what great hardships they and their Families were reduced to. How sad it was with the People, who were depriv'd of those Helps for their Souls which they had greatly valued, and been edified by, and how they sat down at first as Men astonied. Consider (said he) that tho' Men were the Instruments of it, it was the Work of God. Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord? 'Tis the Lord, that hath cover'd the Daughter of Zion with a Cloud. 'Twas our Father, 'twas our dear Lord and Master that made this Breach upon us. He did it righteously for our Sins; the Sins of us his Ministers: It was not for our Sins, that Men put us out, but it was for our Sins, that G O D put us out: Who of us have not acknowledg'd this? 'Twas for the Sins of the good People that lov'd us, who did not Profit as they might have done. 'Twas for the Sins of those that hated us, and were set against us, who desir'd to be rid of such Preaching and Praying, and said, *Prophecie not, therefore they shall not Prophecie*. Yet we hope many of us got good by our Sufferings, were purified by them, and our Hearts made better by our Sadness. G O D would shew us, that he can carry on his Work another way, and multiply his People, even when they are in Affliction; and make even the Sufferings of his Ministers, to turn to the Furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

He sometimes observ'd with thankfulness the care

GOD took of his ejected Ones, how wonderfully he provided for them, so as to *keep them alive*, as the Disciples who were *sent out without Purse or Scrip*; and yet when they were ask'd, *Lack'd you any thing?* answer'd, *Nothing, Lord.* Especially, that they *obtained Mercy of the Lord to be faithful.*

One Remark more I shall take notice of, which he made upon the Silencing of the Ministers; *Lord!* (said he) *what poor weak Creatures are we; when some applaud this as an Excellent Deed, and yet others look upon it as a Great Sin?*

But as he was truly *Conscientious* in his Non-conformity, and intirely satisfy'd in the Reasons of it; so he was eminently *Moderate* in it; and let his *Moderation* be *known unto all Men*: He lov'd all good People of every Denomination, and took all occasions to witness against Bigottry on all sides.

For the most part, he attended the Publick Ministry, and the *Liturgy* both Morning and Afternoon, and Preach'd only in the Evening, and on the Week-days, as he had opportunity, and fell not into any constant stated Work for some Years (as I think) after he was Silenc'd, waiting to see what GOD would do with him.

In the Year 1670. he went to travel in *France* a second time, as Tutor to two young Gentlemen, Mr. *Boscawen* and Mr. *Hambden*; with whom he spent about two Years and a half in making the compleat Tour of that Kingdom and the Parts Adjacent. We find among his Papers a very exact Journal of all his Motions and Observations from the Day he set out from *London*, to the Day he return'd. There we find him at *Diep, Roan, Caen, Alençon, Angiers, Nantes, Saumur, Tours, Orleans, Tholouse, Montpellier, Nismes, Marseilles, Thoulon, Lions, Geneva, Bern, Basle, Zurich, Strasburgh,* and at length at *Paris*: Of these, and abundance of other Places, he gives a very particular Account: Describing the Rarities both of Nature and Art; their Civil Government, the Churches, and Religious Houses; and especially,

especially, an Account of the *Protestants* and their Churches. The Learned Men in every Place, and his Conferences with them, and the Informations he receiv'd from them: In Recording which, there appears a great deal of Care. Had he put his last Hand to this Journal, and publish'd it *then*; I doubt not, but it would have been both an acceptable Entertainment to the World, and a considerable Reputation to him: But his great Modesty conceal'd it, not only from the World, but from his intimate Friends; for I know not of any to whom he communicated it: So far was he from the Ostentation of a Traveller; so little did he value himself upon these Accomplishments, which many would have been proud of; and so much was he taken up with *the better Country, that is the Heavenly*. Yet when there was occasion, he fail'd not to inform and entertain his Friends with his Observations when he was Abroad. Mr. *Boscawen*, one of the Gentlemen that he travell'd with, dy'd at *Strasburgh* of the *Small-pox*, to his great Grief.

While he was at *Paris*, where he continu'd some Months, he wrote a pretty large Treatise, giving a particular *Description of the Roman Catholick Religion*, by comparing their Books, which he carefully read, and their Practice, which he carefully observ'd, with each other. He gives an Account, (1.) Of their Doctrine and Opinions, chiefly from the Council of *Trent*, which he gives an Abstract of. Also from the Canon Law, and the Writings of their Doctors. (2.) Of their Worship and Ceremonies: which he gives an account of by their Books, put out by Order of their Popes, &c. of which the Pontifical, Ritual, Breviary, and Missal are the chief: Also by their Ordinary Practice in Publick and Private: Their Extraordinary Devotions in Processions, Jubilees, Confrairies, &c. And by their Religious Orders of Men and Women. (3.) Of the Means they use to support it, to confirm their own, win upon others, and overcome those that will not be

won upon by them: And Lastly, Of the several sorts of Religions, or Religious Orders among them. Of all which, he saith, *Vidisse est Confutasse*. He adds some of his Thoughts on that Question, Whether those that are devout in the Romish Religion may be sav'd? and concludes their Case highly dangerous, because they are Idolaters; but expresses himself with great Tenderness and Compassion, bearing them record that many of them have a zeal for GOD, tho' not according to Knowledge. He shews in the close the folly and wickedness of those Protestants that make light of Popery and think there is no great Hurt in it.

This Treatise is dedicated to the Reverend Mr. *Samuel Hildersham*, (Son of Mr. *Arthur Hildersham*) to whom he was Nephew by Marriage.

At his Return from his Travels in the Year 1673. he found the Dissenters in *England* blest'd with some Breathing-time from the extreme Persecutions with which for many Years they had been harass'd, and their Assemblies tolerated. This soon brought him back to *Shrewsbury*; for no Employment, no Entertainment was in his account comparable to that of Preaching the Gospel, for the Honour of CHRIST, and the Salvation of precious Souls; when therefore a Door of Opportunity was open'd for that, among the People he had formerly stood in the Relation of a Pastor to, he presently embrac'd it, tho' it was no way to his secular Advantage, and tho' it broke him off very much from his Conversation with Scholars and Great Men. Herein he was a Follower of the Faith of *Moses*, who tho' he was Learn'd in all the Learning of the *Egyptians* visited his Brethren the Children of *Israel*, and was content to take his Lot with them.

Mr. *John Bryan*, (the Son of Dr. *Bryan* of *Coventry*) was turn'd out from St. *Chad's* Church in *Shrewsbury*, and under his Ministry the Presbyterian Dissenters there sat down, a Pious Man, and a good Preacher. With him Mr. *Tallents* joyn'd, and they divided the Work between

between them: The Congregation meeting in the House of that Eminent Christian, Mrs. *Hunt*, Relict of Col. *Hunt*, Member of Parliament. Much Good was now done in that place by the Ministry of these two worthy Men.

Mr. *Tallents* had formerly for the use of his Pupils, drawn up a Scheme of General Chronology, which he had found of great use to them in reading History. This, having leisure for close Study, now he was again settled in *Sbrewsbury*, he set himself to enlarge, which he did to that Degree of Fulness and Exactness, that it very well deserves the Title under which it is known to the World, *A View of Universal History*. It cost him abundance of Pains, more than can be imagin'd, to bring it to Perfection, and to put it into that curious Form in which it appears: He was very exact in comparing his Authors, and careful to avoid mistakes; every Line there was the Product of more Study than perhaps some Pages of another nature would be. He was very intent upon it, and applied himself to it with great Industry. If any came to speak with him in his studying Hours, he would desire them to dispatch their Business in as few Words as they could, that he might return to his Business, which was his great Delight, next to the immediate Service of GOD, and the Work of his Ministry, which he always prefer'd. I remember with what Affection he would bless GOD with his Family, on a Lord's Day Morning, that on that Day we were to lay aside our Studies and our Books, and give our selves to Communion with GOD in Holy Joy and Praise.

Those *Chronological Tables* which give that *View of Universal History*, were finely engraven on 16 Copper Plates in his own House, and Publish'd about the Year 1684, made up either in Books or Maps. How well they were receiv'd, and how much they are and will be valued by the Learned World, I need not say. Some of his Friends were very urgent with him to publish them

them in *Latin*, for the Benefit of Foreigners, but he said he intended them chiefly for the Benefit of the Nobility and Gentry of our own Nation, that they might have things which lay dispers'd, set before them in a clear and short View. 'Tis certain there is nothing in them of Partiality, or that look'd design'd to serve any Party, but plain Truth as far as it can be discover'd.

I find among his Papers many Chronological Disquisitions, and Historical Remarks; some seem to be drawn up in preparation for those Tables, others for the Illustration of them, but a vast deal of Learning there is in them. That which encourag'd him to take pains herein, was the exceeding great Use and Benefit of History: That it shews us GOD's ways and dealings with his Church and People, and the Nations of the World: It helps us to understand the Prophecies of Scripture; And it raiseth us above that Narrowness of Spirit, which most are subject to, and keeps us from thinking that there is no Religion but in our own way. Besides, that it gives great Light to all kinds of Knowledge and Learning. If he would have been prevail'd with to publish Annotations upon his Tables, and such Historical Dissertations, as I find he had furnish'd himself with Materials for, I doubt not but they would have been both very acceptable and very useful.

About the Year 1683. the Meetings in *Shrewsbury* were suppress'd, and he was then forc'd again into obscurity; and durst not be seen there for fear of the Five-Mile Act, which Mr. *Bryan* was brought into Trouble upon. But in the Year 1685. his dear Wife going to *Shrewsbury* on some occasions, and dying suddenly there, he ventur'd thither to do the last Office of Respect to her, which opportunity his Enemies laid hold of, and it being just at the time of the D. of *Monmouth's* Attempt in the West, under pretence of that he was taken up, and sent Prisoner to *Chester* Castle, but upon the Defeat of that Attempt he was Enlarg'd, and retir'd to *London*, where he liv'd very privately. *Solo-*

mon speaks of a time when a *Man is bid*, such a Man.

But at the coming out of the Liberty for *Dissenters* in 1687. he return'd to *Shrewsbury*, and joyn'd with Mr. *Bryan* in the Ministry there; and burning and shining Lights they were in that Place. And now they confin'd not themselves to the Evening of the Sabbath, as formerly; but some time after this Revival of their Liberty, they began to keep their Meetings at the same time with the Publick-worship, both parts of the Day.

Upon occasion of that Indulgence, he wrote for his own satisfaction, a pretty large Tract, which we find among his Papers concerning *compelling People to the Christian Religion, and punishing those that Err in it*. All agree, That those may be restrain'd and punish'd, who go against the Light and Law of Nature, and disturb the Civil-Government. But he undertakes to prove, That the Magistrate is not to force *Jews* and *Heathens* to embrace CHRIST's Truth; nor those that Err in Matters of Faith and Worship, to own the Right; nor to punish and destroy them if they will not: But that the same Weapons are now to be us'd for the Preserving and Reforming of the Church, which the Apostles us'd for the Planting of it; which were, *not Carnal, but Spiritual*; and yet *mighty through God, to pull down strong holds*. He largely examines, not only the Arguments, but the Authorities on both sides, and concludes, That CHRIST builds his Church *by Faith and Love, not by Craft, Violence and Persecution*.

When King *William* and Queen *Mary* were happily settled on the Throne, and each Side seem'd to come to a good Temper, to promote it, he publish'd a small Tract of two or three Sheets, which he call'd, *Sure and large Foundations*. The Design of which, was to promote Catholick Christianity, and Catholick Charity, as the only Healing Methods.

Some Overtures being made in that Reign towards a Comprehension, some worthy Gentlemen that greatly valu'd

valu'd his Judgment, sent for him up to *London* to Discourse with him concerning it; particularly concerning the *Re-ordaining* of those, that were Ordain'd by Presbyters. Upon mature Deliberation, he declar'd, he could not for his part submit to it; and drew up his Reasons at large, which we find among his Papers.

He not only pleaded for, but earnestly press'd *Occasional-Conformity*, as a Token of the Charity we have for those with whom we cannot *statedly* joyn, long before such a noise was made about it, with reference to Offices: And it was his Opinion, That as the *Dissenters* to shew their Charity, ought occasionally to hear the Church Ministers, and joyn with them in their Worship; so the Church Ministers ought occasionally to hear the *Dissenters*, and joyn with them in their Worship; supposing, that if they understood one another better, they would love one another better, and be brought nearer together.

In *October* 1690. good Mrs. *Hunt* dy'd; a great Example in her Place of serious Piety, and all Christian Virtues, lively and unweary'd in the Exercises of Devotion, abounding in every thing that was good, Free and Charitable; and very active to promote Religion, and the Power of Godliness, without any regard to Parties. Upon her Death, the Meeting remov'd to Mr. *Tallents*'s House about one Year, while they were building and fitting up a very decent Place for the purpose, which they enter'd upon *Oct.* 25. 1691. Mr. *Tallents* Preaching the first Sermon on *Isa.* 57. 15. *I dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit.* He caus'd it to be written upon the Walls of the Meeting-Place, That it was built, not for a Faction or a Party; but for promoting Repentance and Faith, in Communion with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Adding that Scripture with which the French Churches usually begin their Publick-worship, *Our Help stands in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.* He sometimes told his Hearers, If

you come to be a People only differing from others in some Opinions, but grow Proud and Carnal, and Worldly and Sensual, G O D will pull your Place down; and let him pull it down.

He took all occasions to declare how much he hated from his Heart the limiting of C H R I S T's Church to a particular Opinion or Party. We are far from thinking (said he) ourselves the only Preachers and condemning all others; as some do in effect, *Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me, to speak unto thee?* (1 Kin. 22. 24.) No; we rejoyce that C H R I S T is preach'd by many others: But we cannot think, there are so many good Preachers, as that there is no need of us, or that we should be laid aside or forbidden; and therefore we say as *Elibu*, without reflecting on others, *We also will speak*; we will throw in our Mite; for we are call'd to the Work, and therefore will lay out what G O D hath given us, since the Ministration of the Spirit is *given to every one to profit withal*. He made it his great Business to preach CHRIST, and Faith in Christ, as the great Principle of Holiness, which he said, he fear'd many spoke of very dimly, and very coldly.

I cannot avoid taking notice here of a most impudent and malicious Calumny, which the Enemies of this good Man cast upon him, That he was a Popish Priest: But if they call'd the Master of the House *Beelzebub*, much more, them of his Household? When he was at London in the Year 1686. it happen'd a Desk he had left at *Shrewsbury*, was open'd by mistake, in which, among other things, was a piece of an old white Damask-bed scollop'd, and a plain pair of Slippers, and a Book in which was enter'd the Name of his Pupils in *Magdalen-College*. A malicious Fellow that was there, reported, That he he saw in a Desk of Mr. Tallents's such Vestments as Priests say Mass in, full of Crosses and Images, and I know not what; and a Book, in which were the Names of such as were admitted into the Order of Jesuits. When Mr. Tallents came down, and found this base

base Slander industriously spread to his prejudice, he had the Fellow before the Major, produc'd the things that were found in the Desk, and so convicted him of Falshood and Malice ; but because he was a poor Man, gave him no other trouble but that of a Check from the Major. Yet there were those who would do all they could to support the Slander ; and one at length that happen'd to say it in the Company of divers, again, and again, *Tallents is a Jesuit, and he hath read Mass at St. Omers, and I will prove it.* There being full Evidence of this Man's speaking these Words, Mr. *Tallents* was advis'd to bring an Action against him ; which he did, and it was Try'd at *Shrewsbury* Assizes in 1693. and the Man was Cast ; but he being poor, the Jury brought in but Fifty Shillings Damages.

In the Year 1701. he bury'd his fourth Wife, with whom he had liv'd about fourteen Years in much comfort ; upon which he left off House-keeping, and went to be a Tabler ; but still having care of the poor Families of many, when he had none of his own.

In the Year 1704. he wrote his excellent *History of Schism, for the promoting of Christian Moderation, and the Communion of Saints.* He was in the Eighty-fifth Year of his Age, when he wrote that Book, and as it is the product of a great deal of Learning, so it is the result of a great deal of Thought of a Mind deeply tinctur'd with Christian Piety and Charity, that found itself much aggriev'd to hear many, who may justly be thought to *Fear G O D, and work Righteousness*, Anathematized, and condemn'd to the Pit of Hell for some Mistakes (to say the worst) concerning Church-Government and Ceremonies. All the Point that Book aim'd at the gaining of, was, *That it is possible, a Dissenter may be Sav'd.* A very modest *Postulatum*, one would think, and easily granted to *Heathens* and *Papists*. But it seems, it might not be granted to the *Dissenters*, at least, not without reluctance ; for the Book was Answer'd by one *S. G.* with a great deal of Passion and

and Indignation, upon Mr. *Dodwell's* Principles: Mr. *Tallents* like a Christian, a Scholar, and a Gentleman, answer'd it with fair Reasoning, and abundance of Candour and Meekness: S. G. reply'd with more Falshood and Bitterness than before, with the most base Misrepresentations, and most scurrilous Reflections that could be; some of Mr. *Tallents* Friends offer'd to expose and banter him, but he would by no means suffer it; and would himself have been at the pains mildly to shew him his Mistakes, but that some of his Friends minded him of the old Observation, that He that fights with a Dunghil, tho' he be a Conqueror, is sure to come off ill dirty'd; and one worthy Gentleman, who upon enquiry found out now who this S. G. was, sent Mr. *Tallents* an Account of his Character, adding, that it was one of the greatest Honours ever done him, that he had once thought him worthy of his Notice, and treated him with so much Civility and Respect, but that he would by no means have him Trouble himself with him a second Time. Answer not such a Writer, according to his Writing.

Let us now observe something concerning Him and his Character, and Conversation, which may be of use to us.

I. In all his Address and Converse, he was a great Example of giving Honour to whom Honour was due, and Love to whom Love. To Persons of Rank and Figure, he was in the highest Degree respectful and complaisant, nor have I ever known any more observant of the Rules of Decency, nor with a better Grace, which was a great Ornament to his Learning and Piety. To his intimate Friends, he was most affectionate and endearing; with what Expressions of Love he us'd to embrace them, and lay them in his Bosom, how dear they were to him as his own Soul, how he would be pleas'd and reviv'd with the sight of them, and how naturally he car'd for their State, must never be forgotten by those that were bless'd with his Friendship.

ship. To his Inferiours he was remarkably condescending, would hear their Complaints with great Patience and Tenderness, and with great Freedom and Familiarity, discourse with those that desir'd his Advice in their Affairs, relating to this World, or the other.

2. In his old Age, he retain'd the Learning both of the School, and of the Academy to Admiration; and would readily repeat *Verbatim*, observable Passages of a great length out of the Classick Authors, as there was Occasion, for the Entertainment of his Friends. Those that would be thus rich when they are Old, must take pains when they are Young. He had something to communicate to those who convers'd with him, concerning all sorts of Learning, but History was his Master-piece, and in that no Man more ready. He sometimes advis'd young Students to trace Learning to its Fountains, and tho' they read New Books, yet to keep the Old Ones by them, and dwell most upon them.

3. He abounded very much in pious Ejaculations, as one that had learn'd to *Pray always*, to *Pray without ceasing*, and to intermix Prayer and Praise not only with the Slumbers of the Night (which I have Reason to think he did) but with the Converse of the Day. When he was in serious Talk with his Friends, how often would he send his Heart to Heaven, and direct their's also that way, in such Devout and Holy Breathings as these, *God look on us! God pity us!* When he heard that his Friends he enquir'd after were in Health and Prosperity, with what seriousness and solemnity would he lift up his Eyes and Hands, and say, *God be praised!* If he heard of the Afflictions of any of them, *GOD Relieve them, Refresh them, Comfort them!* If of the falls of any, *GOD give them Repentance!* If of the Deaths of any, *GOD fit us to die!* When he sent his Service unto his Friends, he would usually add an Ejaculatory Prayer for them, *GOD do them good!* The

Lord

L O R D refresh their Souls with his Love! Adding sometimes, *and my poor dry Soul too!* As the slighty careless use of the Expressions of Prayer, as By-words, is an evidence of a vain Mind, not possess'd with a due Reverence of **G O D** and his Great Name, and is really a profaning of the Holy Things which the Children of *Israel* hallow to the **L O R D** their **G O D**; so the serious and devout use of them, with the indications of a due Attention and Affection, is an evidence of the Dominion of Grace and Holiness in the Heart. And 'tis pity when the former is so much in use among the Profane, his *Enemies* that *take his Name in vain*, the latter should be so little in use among Professors, his Friends, that desire *to give unto him the Glory due unto his Name*. Of this Instance of Devotion, Mr. Tallents was a great Example.

4. He was very happy in counselling and advising his Friends that applied themselves to him, according as their Case and Condition was, their Temper, or their Distemper. He knew how to speak a *word in season* to the Weak; to *the weary*, to the wilful, to comfort with all Tenderness, and yet to rebuke with all Authority, and Faithfulness. And how to express at the same time a just Indignation against a Sin, and yet a due Compassion for Sinners.

He sometimes express'd his Fear concerning many Weak, Melancholy Christians, that they had tired themselves in the Exercises of Devotion; and would advise such to compose and quiet themselves, and keep their Minds as calm and sedate as may be, and not aim to put them always upon the stretch. He would sometimes pleasantly say, The Quietists are the best Christians. And certainly we must take heed of placing Religion too much in the Passions and Pangs even of Holy Love, for we truly honour and enjoy **G O D** not only in the Elevations of the Soul towards him, but the Repose of the Soul in him. *Return to thy Rest, O my Soul, and be at blame, be at ease in G O D.*

And

And as to the external Performances of Religion he sometimes said, Let the Work of GOD be done, and done well, but with as little noise as may be: *The Kingdom of God comes not with Observation.*

5. He was Eminent for his Charity; was charitable in his Judgment, and Censures of others, and made the best of every body: charitable in forgiving Injuries, and passing by Affronts; and charitable to the Poor, ready, very ready to every good Work; not only exciting the Charity of others, but exerting his own, to his Power, yea, and beyond his Power; sparing from himself to supply others: He was as dead to the Wealth of this World as most Men I ever knew, knowing no good in it, but doing good with it. The Little he left behind him (much of which too he left to the Poor, having no Children) is an Evidence for him, (as it was for Calvin at Geneva) that he had no way of *laying up* what he had, but by laying it out in Works of Charity, which is the surest way of *laying up* εὐμελίου καλόν, a Good Security, Pawn or Pledge (so some understand it, 1 Tim. 6. 19.) for the time to come, and so *laying hold on Eternal Life*. He was particularly kind and charitable to Strangers in Distress, whom we must not be *forgetful to entertain*, (yet with Prudence and Caution) because tho' some thereby have entertain'd Devils incarnate, yet others thereby have *entertained Angels unawares*, Heb. 13. 2.

6. His Preaching was very plain and familiar, but very Affectionate, and that which manifestly came from the Heart, and therefore was most likely to reach to the Heart. He study'd not Words but Things, remembering that of Minucius Felix, *Quo imperitior sermo, eo illustrior Ratio est*; and that oftentimes there is most Power and Demonstration of the Spirit there where is least of the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom. His Explications were clear; his Reasonings strong and convincing; and his Quotations of Scripture, very pertinent, and sometimes surprizing.

I find a Sermon on *Jermiab 3. 4. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father?* Which he begins thus, My Brethren, what shall I speak to you this Day from the LORD, for your Spiritual encouragement, and strengthening in the Ways of the LORD? We meet together for this End, and we have gracious Promises, that He will be with us to teach and strengthen us: I have it in my Heart at this time, to tell you, That you are to look upon GOD as your Father, and to hold that fast in your Hearts.

Another thus: I would fain speak a good Word to Day concerning JESUS CHRIST, for the good of you here present, and of my own Soul.

Another thus: What I have now to say, is that which hath somewhat affected me in my own private Thoughts; and I hope, may affect and work upon you for good, through the Grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

He would often in his Preaching, speak with Application to himself. This Word is to me, O that it may reach my Heart. He frequently intermix'd pious Ejaculations with his Preaching, and sometimes recommended it to others; as that which was both proper to affect the Hearers, and the way to fetch in Divine Grace for the making of what he said effectual.

In times of Distress, and Fear, and Expectation, he comforted himself and his Friends, not only with the Doctrine of GOD's Universal Providence (many of the Heathen encourag'd themselves with that) but he fetch'd his Support chiefly from those Principles which are purely Christian, as most proper for us, and most powerful, That *we see Jesus crown'd with Glory and Honour*, Heb. 2. 9. and that he *nourisheth and cherisheth his Church*; and not only protects, but guards it, Eph. 5. 29.

He was very frequent and earnest in pressing the necessity of Brotherly-love among Christians in the several Instances of it, and reproving what is contrary

and destructive to it; Love was the Air he breath'd in.

I remember once, when I came to visit him not long ago, he told me, He had been Preaching the Day before concerning *the Holy Ghost*, and had observ'd among other things, that he thought it was a defect among us, that we only pray'd for the Holy Spirit (as we are directed, *Acts 11. 13.*) and did not pray, so much as we should, to the Holy Spirit, for his Gifts and Graces, and Comforts, which we ought to do; for he is God, and therefore to be pray'd to: And he mention'd the *Litany* for an Example, O God, *the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us.*

He earnestly press'd Young Ministers to Preach CHRIST much, and the Mystery of the Gospel, wherein (saith he) if I may judge of others by myself, we are generally so ignorant, and live so little by it; That enlightens, softens, humbles, sweetens the Heart, and makes it truly fruitful and thankful.

He was much upon it in several Sermons, not long before he dy'd, to shew, That CHRIST our Lord merited for us, not only in his Death, tho' chiefly then, but also in the Obedience of his Life: Both his Life and his Death, were both exemplary to us, and meritorious for us.

7. I must observe, That he was in his Judgment, much for extolling Free-Grace, and the Imputation of CHRIST's Righteousness to us for our Justification, and the Operation of the Spirit in us for our Sanctification. A little before his Death, he said that Scripture, *Isa. 55. 1. Without Money, and without Price,* had often been his Comfort and Support; for (said he) I have nothing but a poor naked Soul to bring to CHRIST. He also said sometimes, That we must take heed of resting too much upon our Covenanting with GOD; for it is by his Promises to us, that we partake of a Divine Nature, not by ours to him.

It was not long before his Death, that he wrote

thus

thus to me: I insert it both as a Specimen of his Letters to his Friends, and an Intimation of his Sentiments in these things. [I send this by one that is a poor melancholly afflicted, grieved, but I think, a holy Woman; I hope I got good by my Discourse with her: Alas, we are generally secure and dull, and any that are awaken'd indeed, and under Temptations are useful to such. Lately reading Luther's Life in Melchior Adamus, besides other things, I find an excellent Passage concerning Justification by Faith, which sets the Matter most lively before us. Nemo pro nostris Peccatis mortuus est nisi solus Jesus Christus Filius Dei; Iterum Iterumque dico solus & unus Jesus Dei Filius a Peccatis nos redemit; & impossibile est ut Christum aliter quam sola Fide amplectar, &c. And shall we join our Sufferings or Obedience to his? yet he dy'd to purchase a holy People to himself; requires Holiness in His, works it in them, by the Ways he appoints; and through Holiness which he makes necessary to Salvation will bring them to it. Farewell (Dear Sir) our God I trust will carry us on through Faith to Salvation. Let us pray for it in Faith; Go on, Rejoyce in the Lord: Abound in his Work; And pray for old poor dull me, that I may not be altogether useless, but may finish my short Course with Joy.

Take his Sense of this with Application to himself, as 'tis found in a Paper written with his own Hand. I pray'd much for the Pardon of my Sins, so great and many given to this Day, for great Mercies and Forgivenesses; That Righteousness may be imputed to me, Rom. 4. 11, 12. That I may be justify'd as Holy Abraham was by a Righteousness imputed, as Holy David was my Sins covered, i. e. by Christ's Atonement; as all the Saints have been, not by their own Works and Righteousness (which is but Rags) but by the Righteousness of Christ wrought for us, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith, and be found in that. Let me live by that, and have Peace with God by it: If others despise it, let me highly prize it: If others cast it away, let me live by that: If Others speak against it, let me make my boast of it: Let it be my Joy, my Crown, my Life, my

Peace, my Glorifying, my All. Let his Spirit be imparted to me, to sanctify, to rule me: his Righteousness be imputed to me; this is all my Hope, that I may be found in the Crowd among the many Thousands of God's People (Num. 10. 36.) whom he cares for and loves, tho' but among the least of them, a little Member of that great Body. Such as these were the constant Breathings of his pious Soul.

Let me add one thing upon this, That tho' he differ'd much from the Reverend Mr. Baxter, in many of his Notions and Expressions concerning Justification, and other Things; yet he highly valu'd that Great Man for his Learning and Piety, and the Service he had done the Church by his Practical Writings, and often spoke of him with great Respect and Affection.

He took occasion sometimes to speak the Hopes he had of the Flourishing of the Christian Church in the latter Days: That the *Jews* should be Converted; the Papal Antichristian Kingdom destroy'd, and Religion, in the Power of it, should prevail; grounded his Hopes on the Prophecies of the *New Testament*: And (said he) when GOD shall repair the Breaches of his Church, and build it up greatly, the Subtilties of the Schools, and many Canons of Councils, and Customs of old, will be laid aside, and a great Simplicity in Things of Faith and Worship, shall be own'd and practis'd: No more Conditions shall be made for Communion of Churches, than CHRIST makes for Communion with him: And Uniformity in smaller Matters, shall not be made necessary to Unity.

We have now nothing to do but to give some account of the End of this Good Man's Conversation. It pleas'd that GOD in whose hand our times are to lengthen or shorten as he pleaseth, to continue him long a burning and a shining Light in his Church; purely to his good Providence it must be attributed, and not to any thing that appear'd extraordinary either in his Constitution or Management of himself.

Moses observ'd that in his time if Men liv'd to be Four-

score

score Years, even their Strength was then commonly Labour and Sorrow : but here was one who went almost Nine Years beyond that, and yet his Strength did not seem to be Labour and Sorrow, but he continued both chearful and useful to the last, even in those evil days, of which Men commonly say they have *no Pleasure in them* ; he had the pleasure of looking backward upon the Grace of GOD bestowed upon him, and forward upon the Glory of GOD prepar'd for him, and little of bodily Pain and Distemper to be an allay to his Pleasure. Thus in his advanced Years he continued to Walk humbly with GOD in Holy Security and Serenity of Mind, and a believing Expectation of the Glory to be revealed.

In the Year 1699. Mr. *Bryon*, who had long been his Fellow-Labourer in *Shrewsbury*, finish'd his Course with Joy : Thereupon Mr. *James Owen* of *Oswestry* was chosen to joyn with him in the Work of the Ministry there ; But it pleased GOD to put an End to his most useful Life and Labours in *April* 1706. Upon his Death they chose Dr. *Benion*, then Minister at *Broad-Oke*, who came and settled among them that Year, and was every way agreeable both to Mr. *Tallents* and to the People, but *Te tantum terris ostendunt Fata nec ultra esse sinunt*, he had soon finished his Testimony, and was remanded *Mar. 4.* 1707. when he had been but a Year and Three Quarters at *Shrewsbury* ; He was very dear to Mr. *Tallents*, and as a Son with the Father, so did he serve with him in the Gospel : And his Death did accordingly go very near him, he scarce look'd up with any chearfulness after.

He had had very little Sickness ; but as he grew in to years, complain'd sometimes of faintness, and feebleness, and shortness of breathing, which oblig'd him to favour himself a little in his Work : And if he had spent himself but in Discourse with his Friends, he found it requisite to retire and repose himself a little.

On *Wednesday, Mar. 24.* about a Fortnight after the Doctor was buried, as he was washing him, and for ought appear'd, as well as he us'd to be, he fainted away of a sudden, and had fallen to the Ground if those about him had not been immediately aware of it and help'd him. In a little time he came to himself, and the next day wrote a Letter in his Bed, made some Alterations in his Will, gave Directions about his Funeral, and then address'd himself to his Dying Work, with the Holy Chearfulness that became so good a Christian, as one that had nothing else to do but to dye. Sometimes he intimated, that if it were the Will of GOD, he could desire to live a little while to see the Congregation well settled under another Minister; and there was sometimes hope of his Recovery, and that he might yet have been instrumental therein; But the Wise GOD, whose Judgments are a great Deep, order'd otherwise, that he should leave them just at a time when they most needed him. Many a time after Dr. Benion's Death, he pray'd earnestly to GOD to provide good Ministers for that Congregation, which lay so near his Heart. And since his Death, we have seen his Prayers answer'd: But GOD will shew that he can do his own Work without the Agency even of those Instruments that we think necessary, and depend most upon. He useth the Service of many, but needs the Service of none.

And though to abide in the *Flesh* might well be thought, especially at that Juncture *more profitable for them*, yet he soon got over that Difficulty, and left the Care of the Sheep to the great Shepherd, who when he hath Work to do, will never want fit Instruments to do it with. He therefore pray'd, that if his Work were done, he might be by the Grace of GOD, not only willing, but desirous to depart, and to be with CHRIST, which he knew to be far better.

He charg'd all about him, that they should not pray

for

for his Life; but that he might be enabled patiently to wait for his Change.

When he came to himself, by GOD's Blessing on the use of Means from that fainting Fit, with which his Illness began, he said to those about him, *Why did you not let a poor old Man go away quietly?* He often express'd his Repentance for Sin, and his Reliance on CHRIST alone; and some Days before he dy'd, he bless'd GOD he was *more full of inward Comfort and Joy, than he was able to express.*

He complain'd very little either of Pain or Sickness, but gradually decay'd, and burnt lower and lower like a Candle in the Socket. He often pray'd to GOD for a Blessing on those about him, and said, *Here I lye waiting, waiting.* After some time he began to think it long, that he had not his Release, and to cry, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly:* But he knew GOD's Time is the best, and therefore would wait with Patience for it, for the Vision is for an appointed Time, and at the end it shall speak, and not lye.

On Lord's Day Apr. 11. 1708. he said he would have those about him go to worship GOD in the solemn Assembly, and would have only one to stay with him. That Day he took more Refreshment, and seem'd to be more reviv'd, than he had been of some time before. Divers savoury Words drop'd from him; and he continued very sensible, Calling upon GOD, till about Nine or Ten a Clock that Evening, when he sweetly slept in Jesus, and on that Day of Rest, enter'd into his Everlasting Rest. Praised be that GOD by whose Grace he was enabled to finish well.

On Thursday following Apr. 15. the dear Remains were solemnly Deposited in St. Mary's Church, and a Sermon preach'd at his own Meeting-place the same Evening on that sad Occasion, and many, very many did him Honour at his Death, as they did to *Jehoiada* (who dy'd in a good old Age) *because he had done good in Israel.*

A Paper was found after his Death, appointing what *Epitaph* should be inscrib'd on his *Grave-stone*, and expressing the Year of his Life then Current; intimating, that he did not expect to out-live that Year.

Reliquiæ D. Francisci Tallents, Olim Col. Magd. Cant. Sen. Socij, Postea Concionatoris Publici in hac Ecclesiâ ab Ann. 1652. ad Aug. 24. 1662. Qui post varios Labores, expectans misericordiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi in vitam Aeternam, tandem decessit Anno Etatis suæ 89. Mensis Die —



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